

TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Office of The Town Clerk

MINUTES FROM THE WORKSHOP MEETING OF MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL, LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION HELD ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2002, REGARDING THE PALM BEACH PUBLIC SCHOOL

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by President William J. Brooks. On roll call, the following Elected Officials were found to be in present:

Mayor Lesly S. Smith
President Brooks
President Pro-Tem Norman P. Goldblum
Councilman Samuel McLendon

Councilman Jack McDonald was absent.
Councilman Allen S. Wyett was absent.

Also attending for all or part of the meeting were:

Town Manager Peter B. Elwell
Town Attorney John Randolph
Police Chief Michael S. Reiter;
Police Major Gary B. Sallenbach
Town Engineer James Bowser
Director of Planning, Zoning, and Building Robert L. Moore
Zoning Administrator Paul Castro
Planning Administrator Timothy M. Frank
Recreation Director Russell Bitzer
Recreation Supervisor II Alan Brown
Town Clerk Mary A. Pollitt.
Town Clerk Secretary III Diane Kassover

Also attending for all or part of the meeting were the following members of the
Landmarks Preservation Commission

Chairman Eugene Pandula
Vice Chairman Elizabeth (Shields) Dowdle

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Secretary Ann Blades
Sari M. Wilkey
Ann (Lilja) Vanneck
Judy Wells Hoffman

Alternate Member Wendy Victor
Alternate Member Mario Nievera

Jack Pym was absent.
Alternate Member Patrick Segraves was absent.

Also attending for all or part of the meeting were the following members of the
Recreation Advisory Commission:

Chairperson Gail Coniglio
James Gavigan
Arthur Gross
Eileen Morris
Larry Ochstein
Stuart Shulman
Michael Spazani
Alternate Member Milissa Agnello
Alternate Member Bill Bone
Alternate Member Ken Fishman

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The invocation was given by Town Clerk Pollitt. President Brooks led the pledge of
allegiance.

President Brooks announced that this was a workshop meeting and that there would
be no definitive action taken by the Council.

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President Brooks outlined how the meeting would proceed. The Palm Beach County School District would be heard first regarding the revised plan for the replacement of the Palm Beach Public School. The Chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, Mr. Pandula would comment next and then any other members of Landmarks who wished to comment would be heard. The Chair of the Recreation Advisory Commission, Mrs. Coniglio would be heard after that with comments from any other members of that Commission.

President Brooks announced public comments could be made after the presentations. He said that after the public has spoken, the Mayor and Town Council will give their comments and then the meeting will be adjourned.

**III. PRESENTATION REGARDING REVISED PLAN FOR REPLACEMENT OF
PALM BEACH PUBLIC SCHOOL**

Kris Garrison, Director of Planning, Palm Beach County School District, and Young Song, Project Architect

Ms. Garrison, Director of Planning, Palm Beach County School District addressed the Mayor, Town Council and Commission members. She introduced the team members present from the School District. She began with Young Song, a principal in the architectural firm, Song & Associates, which is in charge of Palm Beach Public. Ms. Garrison introduced the two associates here with Ms. Song, Ray Manning and Gregory Hong. Present from the School District was Tom Johns, Director of the department that oversees school construction and Sandra Player, Senior Projects Administrator overseeing Palm Beach Public.

Ms. Garrison said she would review some history to get a sense of how they got here today. She explained that Palm Beach County has a very impressive construction program and the School Board of Palm Beach County is a part of that program. She stated that the School Board is committed to the modernization of existing schools and they do not want to build new schools at the expense of existing schools.

Ms. Garrison explained that in 1999, an assessment was done of all public schools that were more than thirty-five years old and this included Palm Beach Public. She said the condition of the facilities was looked at and how they compared to current educational standards. She continued that Palm Beach Public was near the very top

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of the list, in order of priority, and that is why it is scheduled for modernization.

Ms. Garrison told how the School Board of Palm Beach County has adopted a five year capital construction plan which includes the reconstruction of Palm Beach Public on its existing site.

Ms. Garrison felt that there was a little confusion about the modernization process and what the School District does when they modernize a campus. She said that because the District is using public dollars on construction of a school, it is required to go through a State analysis called a Castaldi. She explained that the analysis looks at whether it is more cost effective to renovate the building or if it is more cost effective to actually replace/rebuild the building. She stated that in the case of Palm Beach Public, the analysis found that only a couple of buildings would be cost effective to remodel rather than rebuild. She said they were the buildings across the center of the campus and noted that one was the barrel tiled media center which the State requires them to retain. She said it was determined that it was cost effective for the remainder of the buildings to be rebuilt. She said that, to the extent the budget allows, their intention is to rebuild them in a way they compliment the surrounding neighborhood and community standards.

Ms. Garrison said there are special challenges, in this case, that are not normally present in the modernization process. She explained that one is the split campus because current State rules do not allow for split campuses as they do not want children crossing the street. She said it is the hope that this potentially very dangerous situation will be eliminated and the entire school can be rebuilt on the eastern campus.

Ms. Garrison said that the other design challenge is the softball field. She explained that it sits partially on School Board property and they plan to reconstruct it completely on Town property. She said that after feedback was received from Town staff, it was moved as close to the school's property as possible but completely on Town property. She stated they have worked very hard to try and keep that ballfield playable.

Ms. Garrison said that there is another challenge and that is the small lot size of the campus with the east campus consisting of only 2.4 acres. She stated that the extremely talented and creative design team has been able to come up with a very

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attractive design.

Ms. Garrison said throughout the many meetings held to get community input, the two themes that came up consistently were traffic and parking. She stated that in addition to traffic and parking concerns, there were other issues taken into consideration such as the aesthetics in this location.

Ms. Garrison said they were asked to try and improve the traffic circulation on the campus and to eliminate school buses from traveling through the neighborhood. She stated they had to go back to the drawing board because originally they had the school buses heading north through the neighborhood.

Ms. Garrison reported that they were asked to maximize the parking in their new design and she felt that this had been achieved very successfully.

Ms. Garrison presented boards showing the building, site plan and parking configurations. She explained that a traffic study had been commissioned and the current design improves circulation with parents and buses turning immediately off of Royal Palm into the school campus. She explained that there is no room for stacking along Cocoanut for cars to get oriented onto the roadway before turning into the campus. She said this design creates a little bit more stacking along Cocoanut before the bus and parent traffic turn into the campus. Ms. Garrison said the other extraordinary improvement in this new design is that they were very successful in adding to the number of parking spaces. She noted that there will be forty spaces compared to the twenty-three there now.

Ms. Garrison discussed benefits to the community once the school has been reconstructed. She noted that one was the addition of a small parking lot which would have ten spaces located right near the tennis courts. She stated that a joint use agreement can be created so that this parking lot can be shared during non-school hours.

Ms. Garrison pointed to the courtyard area of the campus which will include an outdoor stage. She noted that when schools are built they are built for the community and very often include inter-local agreements enabling the community to use the school's facilities such as the outdoor stage and indoor cafeteria.

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Ms. Garrison discussed the architectural design and reported that the existing school is a hodgepodge of buildings that were designed during five different periods by five different architects. She stated that by using one architect, with a master plan, the Town has a great opportunity to build a new school that completely meets educational specifications. She noted that they tried to pick up on some of the features of the existing school, and it was determined from feedback they received that the north elevation, which has the colonnade, is one of the most important architectural features on the entire campus. She reported that the design being presented today does preserve that north elevation, and it will be incorporated into the final design of the building. She mentioned that Yong's team picked up on that theme and there will be a colonnade feature on the west elevation to mimic the articulation on the north elevation.

Ms. Garrison pointed to the media center and said it is staying in the middle of the campus because the School Board is required to retain it. She said that Ms. Song's team also picked up on the barrel tile feature on the media center, and the Mediterranean style of some of the buildings on the campus to create a watch clock tower feature that would be on the southwest corner of the campus. She reported that this building would have a presence along Royal Palm.

Ms. Song, when called upon, stated she had nothing to add and would be glad to answer any questions that might come up later.

Mayor Smith said she had heard there was criticism from the commissions that they did not have more input. She explained that it was very difficult to get all the commissions together and this was the first opportunity for everyone to be together and go over the final plan. She mentioned that the Town did try for eight weeks to get everyone together but the School Board was not ready. She said that the Town is not calling the shots and is at the discretion of the School Board.

Mayor Smith said that this meeting is an educational process for everyone and they should be open minded. She stated there are many different points of views on the school which everyone has read in the paper and has heard through various means in the last couple of weeks. She said that there is one thing that everyone knows and that is we are a very civil society and a very civil Town and everyone looks forward to this educational process. She said that one thing to remember is that we respect each others right to disagree but in a very nice way.

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Councilman Mr. McLendon stated that this site is very small for a school and it wouldn't even be considered if the school didn't already exist there. He said that he was confused with regard to the existing size of the school. He reported that he thought that it was planned for 365 students but thought he had heard the architect say it is 415 now and proposed to go to 490. He questioned the need to expand to that extent.

Ms. Song responded that currently there are 414 students attending the school. She said that there will be approximately twenty-seven additional students after the school is completely built.

Councilman McLendon wanted to clarify that the new school is being designed to hold 445 students. He continued that he was also interested in hearing more about the parking solution but will postpone anything further until the others have had a chance to speak.

President Pro-Tem Goldblum stated that he walked the property and saw what existed today. He said he has his own beliefs but would like to hear input first from all the citizens who want to speak.

President Brooks said he would hold his comments until after he hears from the Landmarks Preservation Commission, Recreational Advisory Commission and members of the public.

Director of Planning, Zoning and Building Moore stated that he felt they needed to reestablish the student count. He wanted to know what the school was currently designed for today.

Ms. Song said it was designed for 445 capacity.

Director Moore wanted to know what is the enrollment today.

Ms. Song said it was 414.

Gene Pandula, Chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, said he was going to limit his thoughts to the broad picture of the architectural scheme and how it relates to the landmarking of this site. He stated that this site has been a landmark

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in the Town since 1995. He continued that this proposal essentially would de-designate it or demolish it causing the most critical architectural feature of the site to be lost. He said the focus should really be on the original building on the northwest corner built in 1921 by R.H. Tremble and also on the additions which create the courtyard and arcade. He stated this is the essence, the soul and the beginning of the development of this property. He said this proposal removes that building as well as the one built in 1958 by Gustav Maas.

Mr. Pandula stated that there have been discussions in Town regarding landmarking and where it is going with regard to a crop of buildings from the 50's, 60's and 70's now being considered for landmark status. He didn't know if those buildings would help make a case for this 1950's building but stated that one could be made because it contributes something that very few other buildings in Town do. He said his point is that the two most philosophically architecturally important features of this site will be lost.

Mr. Pandula stated that the buildings by Lindley Hoffman's firm built in 1955 are probably not historically significant but provided the perfect balance for what they were intended to do which was to knit together the disparate elements of the site. He said the building that has now become the center of the courtyard, architecturally, is probably the least important one to keep. He stated the site should be looked at in that context. He reported that it is a very difficult problem to solve and a lot of work has gone into it. He said his initial opinion of what is being shown here is basically some kind of prototypical suburban school being shoe-horned onto a landmarked site in a small Town. He continued that it is a civic building occupying a prominent site which is the gateway to the community. He stated he is afraid the Town is losing some dignified architecture in favor of something that will not be that good or even up to the same level that is here now. He said that he cannot speak to the issues of school design or the distances of travel for kindergarten children versus all the rest but can speak from the broad scope of landmark architecture.

Ms. Garrison wanted to know if Mr. Pandula comments were all directed to the east campus.

Mr. Pandula asked if it is the only campus being talked about today.

Ms. Garrison said yes.

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Ms. Garrison questioned if the other feature he mentioned was on the Maas portion, on the southwest corner.

Mr. Pandula said yes but that he was not suggesting that necessarily has to be saved.

Ms. Garrison asked what was the most important, the building on the northwest?

Mr. Pandula replied that was the most critical. He said that he was trying to convey by bringing up the Maas portion of the site that there is another piece of architecture here in Town that is being discussed, philosophically, as possibly being granted landmark status from the 50's, 60's and 70's. He said, in his personal view, he would be willing to see that building go for the greater good of the site and to keep the school here. He stated he viewed as a critical piece of architecture the Tremble building of 1921 and the late 20's portion on the northwest corner. He reiterated, as sad as it would be to see the Maas building go because of what it might architecturally represent to us, he felt it was a worthwhile trade off. He stated that he does not feel that way about the other one.

Ms. Garrison asked if he saw any way that just the elevations could be preserved enabling them to get the inside space needed for educational programs. She stated the problem is that it really needs to be part of the central activity space and certain things have to be on the ground level. She said that the building is not reusable in its current footprint and that is why they are trying to preserve the elevation but have the innards meet current educational needs.

Mr. Pandula said he understood that but it is the School Board's design problem.

Mayor Smith mentioned that the audience does not realize the constraints that the School Board has put on the physical layout of the school. She asked if they could elaborate on what the School Board feels must be there even though there are some that disagree. She explained that one of things that is driving this design is that the first grade has to be on the first floor.

Ms. Song agreed that the northwest building is really beautiful and full of charm. She stated that when designing elementary schools, especially public schools, they are faced with a lot of requirements provided by the State of Florida that needs to be followed. She mentioned that the classrooms of kindergartners and first graders are

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not allowed on the second floor as well as any functions they attend. She reported that they have to be on the ground floor. Ms. Song said that today they do look into three and even four story buildings. She stated that not only is the site's small size a challenge but the required space needed to provide for children's education is also a challenge. She said that, as Mr. Pandula mentioned, if they had the freedom to demolish the media center building and save the other building, they would be able to move around. She stated they cannot move around because of the challenge of the media center which according to State law cannot be demolished. She reiterated that the Castaldi Formula does not allow them to demolish and build a new building. She stated that it was very difficult to plan, when working within those parameters, to try to find the most convenient traffic pattern given the conditions, to try to find the maximum number of parking spaces and to work within the given budget. She reported that what they did was try to save the elements of the archways, the special elements on north side and save some part of what the building had by providing a glass arched opening from the multipurpose room. She said it may not be exactly an open courtyard but when you drive through you still have a secondary openness.

Ms. Garrison added to what Ms. Song said in that they share the frustration over the design constraints that some of the State laws place on them. She stated they do not normally take for granted State rules and have challenged them. She reported they challenged the Castaldi on this school because there was another building they had been told to remove and they were successful in getting that overturned. She stated the media center is too new and because of that they have not been able to overturn the State's requirements. She said that they had the Commissioner of Education come to look at the building and they were still unable to get a waiver. She stated that they would prefer very much to demolish that building but it is a design absolute and there is no negotiation on that for them because they cannot tear it down. She wanted them to know that they are not being stubborn but they have to abide by that. She said that because it is right smack in the middle of the campus there are only a couple of spots on the campus that provide the room for the multipurpose space that is needed for the campus.

Ms. Garrison reiterated that the other absolute is where the kindergartners go. She stated they have to be on the ground floor and Ms. Song has creatively tried to look at different designs such as a three-story building but just couldn't make it work on this campus. She noted that it was not just the School Board being obstructionists but that they had to live by a quite few levels of rules.

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Mr. Pandula stated that in answering the question, he did not think the School Board's plan was sufficient to maintain the integrity of the building or the spirit of the original site which was the first school building in Town after the old red school house. He stated that the gesture of just saving three arches is meaningless and doesn't do anything for them. He hoped an additional layer of thought would be put into this and it could somehow be worked around what is there.

Judy Wells Hoffman, member of the Landmarks Commission, stated that she didn't think saving elements of a building is the same as saving an absolutely fantastic building. She said that her husband's firm did build the media center which the School Board received a special exception for in January of 1988. She stated her husband's opinion was that the best building as well as a very special one is the corner patio building and it should be kept intact. She mentioned that he used to be on the Landmarks Commission, and he felt everything else should be torn down including the media building which his firm did.

Ann Vanneck, member of the Landmarks Commission, said that the School Board has pushed for what they need and have sort of ignored the landmark value of the school and the quaintness of that one building. She said what Mr. Pandula said best of all is that you are trying put a large amount of buildings in a very small space. She stated that what people in this Town have been crying about, whether it is Landmarks or ARCOM, is that we are overbuilding our lots. She said losing something that has great value to us for a new urban style school is not appropriate. She hoped that if the Town Council could appeal to the State and keep the Tremble building, it should be done because more would be lost visually and in green space.

Mr. Brooks acknowledged the presence of Mr. Tom Lynch who is the Chairman of the Palm Beach County School Board and thanked him for coming today.

Town Manager Elwell thought it would be helpful for Mr. Randolph to clarify the relationship between the Town's landmark ordinance and applicable State Statutes regarding the landmark issue.

Town Attorney Randolph said the State in adopting legislation relating to the siting of school facilities intended that it should be a sort of negotiating process. He added that the State recognizes the ability of a municipality to impose reasonable

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development standards, but the State also indicated that a municipality may not deny the location of a school or the reasonable use of a school. He said that what this comes down to is whether or not the school can accommodate its intended purpose within the facility the Town wishes to see. He continued that if their purpose can't be achieved, while at the same time preserving the school, there may be a conflict in the legislation which says the Town cannot deny the school but it can impose reasonable development standards. He continued that if the imposition of reasonable development standards denies the ability of the school to operate the way they are intended to, then they may be at loggerheads. Mr. Randolph stated that there is a balancing act that needs to be achieved between the School Board and the Town. He said that if the school can accommodate its needs and still meet the development standards of the Town, specifically as it relates to landmarking, then he believed it is reasonable for the Town to impose its landmark regulations on the school.

Ms. Garrison said that she failed to mention in her opening remarks that it was very important to understand the thought that has gone into this. She said she realizes that it may seem that they have disregarded the Town's preservation concerns but early on in the process they did take a look at all of the buildings. She advised that the feedback they got was that the building that exists on the west campus was the most important and that is why they made the decision to focus on the east campus with the west building remaining intact. She asked if that was a misconception on their part?

Jane Day, Landmark Consultant, stated that the west campus was built later than the eastern campus. She explained that the Town fathers had lobbied for more than nine years to get a public school in the Town of Palm Beach. She said the original school was built on the corner of Cocanut Row and Seaview Avenue in 1921 and the building opened with two classrooms, two teachers and fifty students. She stated that it expanded quickly as residents discovered there was a school on the island. Ms. Day said the courtyard was built in 1923/1924. She continued that in 1927, the school expanded to the junior high level and they wanted to move to the western campus. She mentioned that William Manley King was the School Board architect and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. She stated that under Mayor John Sheppard, the Town raised \$30,000 to build on the western campus because the School Board did not have the funds for it at that time.

Ms. Day stated that there are two very important buildings that talk about the

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expansion of the Town historically. She continued that the main point to consider is that the Town's citizens have always respected and valued education and have always wanted the proper facilities for their students. She stated that both of these areas of the campus are important and were mentioned in the landmark designation of 1995. She reiterated that both the original section from 1921 and the western campus were the two most important portions of the campus. She said they are important equally but just from different time periods of development.

Ms. Garrison stated that the special building that is being talked about is below the hundred year flood elevations. She said that if there was some sort of collaborative effort, it would require a great expense to raise that building above flood elevation. She stated that if the building is saved, it would be at the expense of parking. She said it would be a public policy decision and there are trade offs.

Gail Coniglio, Chairwoman of the Recreation Advisory Commission, asked Ms. Garrison to help her understand the architectural plans. She questioned the plan and if it was considered a renovation or was it considered a new school.

Ms. Garrison replied they mix terminology and broadly use the term modernization but in this case, she would call it a reconstruction.

Mrs. Coniglio said that from what Ms. Garrison just told her she felt that they are rebuilding the school and that it is not considered a renovation because they are not doing portions of it.

Ms. Garrison replied that was correct and that she has never used the word renovation.

Mrs. Coniglio stated that Ms. Garrison reported that they were increasing the size of the school and wanted to know by how much.

Ms. Garrison stated that it was not their intention to enlarge the school.

Mrs. Coniglio wanted to know if they were filling the entire site owned by the School Board.

Ms. Garrison replied that was correct.

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Mrs. Coniglio asked if they were increasing the size of the school because there is property on the site that has not been filled?

Mrs. Garrison replied that the reason the school is getting larger is not to increase the number of students but because the current educational standards are higher than they were when the school was built. She said that the classrooms would be larger and the offerings at the school would be better because they are required to meet the needs of those programs.

Mrs. Coniglio stated that she understood that but stated again that they were increasing the size of the school.

Ms. Garrison replied correct.

Mrs. Coniglio said she understood that the current capacity is 445 with only 414 students, at this point, and that once this was done, the increase in students would actually be thirty-one.

Ms. Garrison said they are not increasing the number of students.

Mrs. Coniglio said that the potential is for thirty-one more students.

Ms. Garrison said correct, the capacity would be for thirty-one more students.

Mrs. Coniglio stated that currently the school is on 2.4 acres and wanted to know how this compared to other public schools.

Ms. Garrison replied that as she had previously mentioned, it is one of the top three smallest campuses in the school district. She said that when you go out west, where there is more land, they like to have fifteen acres for an elementary school.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if this site was large enough for their proposal?

Ms. Garrison replied that it is a design that meets their educational needs.

Mrs. Coniglio stated that it was her understanding that the west campus could not be used for students but would be used entirely for administrative use.

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Ms. Garrison replied that, as she mentioned earlier, current State requirements do not allow for split campuses. She stated that it was their goal to eliminate the split campus design element with the modernization.

Mrs. Coniglio asked what will happen to the west side of the street?

Ms. Garrison responded that would be a decision made by the Palm Beach County School Board but it would likely be considered for divestiture.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if it would be a two-story building continuously?

Ms. Song replied no, but there would be a two-story classroom building next to Royal Palm Way. She said on the north is a one story but it will be a little higher than the normal one story buildings because it is marked to be a cafeteria. She stated that it would have higher ceilings and would be about one and a half stories.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if the area across Cocoanut Row would remain one story?

Ms. Song replied that it would not and pointed out the exact locations on the plans where the one and half and two story buildings would be.

Mrs. Coniglio asked that if she was on the soccer field, would she be looking directly at a wall?

Ms. Song replied yes it would be the two story high classroom building.

Mrs. Coniglio asked now it was a one story building?

Ms. Song said yes.

Mrs. Coniglio asked that since she is architecturally confused and was not able to study the plans before this meeting, would they be able to outline what is existing and how it will encroach on the field? She said she wanted to know how it is now and how they are planning to change it.

Ms. Song, as requested, outlined the existing foot print and then she superimposed the proposed footprint onto it explaining as she went along. She said that there were

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two locations for parking and one area had ten spaces and the other had thirty spaces.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if the baseball field would be on Town property?

Ms. Song replied that they are moving the baseball field to the property line.

Mrs. Coniglio stated that prior to that it was a joint use baseball field used by the School Board and the Recreation Center.

Ms. Song responded that it was used by the Recreation Center, Palm Beach Public School and Palm Beach Day School.

Mrs. Coniglio said it was her recollection that when the media center was built in 1988, it was not going to infringe on the 200 feet or 240 feet that is required for a regulation baseball field. She wanted to know that if by moving it, would it help to create that 240 feet that is required for little league baseball?

Ms. Song answered that someone went out and measured the existing softball field, and it is 185 feet which is being relocated and will remain 185 feet.

Mrs. Coniglio responded that it will not be a regulation field when it is moved. She stated that there is enough room as it exists from behind home plate to the outfield to be considered regulation little league.

Ms. Garrison replied that it will be the same as it is now.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if they were moving it forward?

Ms. Garrison said yes onto Town property.

Ms. Coniglio asked if it will be exactly the same? She said she needed to know if there will there be a twenty-nine foot setback from the base path to the alleys to allow for safe use to the fence line. She also wanted to know if there is room twenty feet from behind home plate to that fence line to allow for a safe play? She stated that ten to twelve feet is needed for a bleacher and is there going to be enough room to maintain this size?

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Ms. Song responded that she just spoke to her architects and they said it meets the softball requirement of twenty-five feet not twenty-nine feet.

Mrs. Coniglio asked that with twenty-five and ten feet for a bleacher and twenty feet from home plate, was there enough space to maintain that safe playing area?

Ms. Garrison replied no.

Ms. Song replied the existing ballfield doesn't have bleachers.

Mrs. Coniglio responded that it does have bleachers on the shared property of the School Board. She stated that the encroachment on the baseball field then has a direct effect on the use of the soccer and lacrosse fields. She said that she hoped the playing fields for soccer and lacrosse would not be in the infield which obviously creates a very unsafe environment. She stated that not only will it eliminate the size requirements for regulation soccer and lacrosse but also significantly compromises the allowed use by all of the children due to its diminished size. She reiterated that there were three groups utilizing this entire piece of property, the Palm Beach Day School, Palm Beach Public School and the residents of Palm Beach.

Mrs. Coniglio asked how close the proposed pavilion would be to the existing sidewalk?

Ms. Song asked which sidewalk she was referring to?

Mrs. Coniglio said it was the one which enters from Seaview up to Recreation's front door.

Mrs. Coniglio asked Ms. Song to show her with the blue pen where the pavilion is.

Ms. Song pointed out where it is.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if it would be used everyday?

Ms. Song stated that it depended on the curriculum.

Mrs. Coniglio asked what is its intended function?

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Ms. Song replied that it is a shaded, covered area for the children who are playing on the field and at times it might be used for an outdoor classroom.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if that area is now shared green space for Palm Beach Public School and for the residents of Palm Beach?

Ms. Garrison said that in their many meetings with the Recreation Director, they did discuss the possibility of using a gate to gain access to it that so it could be used by the Town.

Mrs. Coniglio questioned whether it fills the shared green space used by Palm Beach Public and the Town of Palm Beach?

Ms. Garrison said it meets the school district's specifications for outdoor play area.

Mrs. Coniglio said she understood that but wanted to know if it filled the green space.

Ms. Garrison replied she wasn't sure what standard she was referring to but stated that they are always open to working with the local governments and sharing their facilities.

Mrs. Coniglio told Ms. Garrison that it has always been an established policy which will not change because of this expansion. She said that the current cafeteria and the current gymnasium at the public school has been jointly used for eighty-one years.

Ms. Garrison said that was correct.

Mrs. Coniglio said that the seniors who participate in their morning tennis match will be subjected to continuous activity and the four Palm Beach resident women's teams will compete with added commotion, noise and reduced ambiance. She stated that this perceived infringement negatively impacts the court use and could subsequently reduce their revenue.

Mrs. Coniglio said that she understood that a new parking circulation plan has been created. She stated that the parking problems had been given a high priority by all Town residents during the community forums conducted by the Strategic Planning Board for long range planning. She said that it was presented as an issue not only

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during the season but all year round. She continued that there is never enough parking in Palm Beach particularly in this area for tennis teams, after school sports and the many adult classes and senior programs offered. She said that Seaview Avenue is bumper to bumper due to the Palm Beach Day School, the Palm Beach Public School and the Recreation Center users. She asked how it was possible to add more students to this already stretched situation?

Ms. Garrison replied that, as she mentioned earlier, they are actually almost doubling the number of parking spaces on the campus. She said there are only twenty-three now and the design that Ms. Song's firm has come up with has forty spaces.

Mrs. Coniglio wanted to know who would park in those spots?

Ms. Garrison replied teachers, visitors, volunteers would park there, and after hours the parking could be made available to the Town residents. She stated that they are trying to help them solve the parking problem.

Mrs. Coniglio stated that at night there aren't that many people who park down there, and currently the teachers park very close to Palm Beach Public due to the shared parking agreement between the Town sponsored Four Arts and the Palm Beach Public School. She said that basically those forty spaces are only for the use of the school and asked if that was correct?

Ms. Garrison replied that as she just stated they are for the teachers, for the visitors, for the volunteers and after hours, for Town use.

Mrs. Coniglio said she understood that. She asked if the drop off and pick up remain the same?

Ms. Garrison replied no that they have improved it. She said they commissioned a traffic study, and based on the traffic engineers recommendations, they came up with the best possible traffic circulation plan which will improve the existing circulation.

Mrs. Coniglio asked her to please explain it which she did using the table model.

Mrs. Coniglio said that even though Ms. Song showed how they were moving the bus lane back it meant that it would remain the same narrow bus lane for drop off and

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pick up.

Mrs. Coniglio said her personal observations were that the cars, as Ms. Song said backed up on Royal Palm Way turning left and now there would be one lane east and west. She said that the buses enter the existing narrow bus lane which gets backed up, parents drop off children on Royal Palm going east, parents drop off children on busy Cocoanut Row because there is no where for their cars to go or stop. She said she saw parents back out of that bus lane to avoid the buses that were loading and then unloading. She continued that she is not quite sure that expanding the property and even making the change of adding parking there will ease that situation. She mentioned that she has six children and her most important mantra is the safety of our children. She stated that the crossing guard is constantly vigilant of the children and drivers that aren't careful. She asked if it will get better and then said she didn't think so.

Mrs. Coniglio said that the proposed plan significantly reduced the open green space available. She stated it saddened her to see this diminished so drastically especially with the long history of the Palm Beach Public School, the Recreation Center and the Palm Beach Day School benefitting from its shared use. She reiterated that currently there is a joint use contract which is renewed annually with these facilities and asked if there is no longer a contribution from the Palm Beach County School Board, will it still exist? She said that again she is distressed by this huge loss to the residents, children and the future.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if they could clarify for her the construction process. She said that the initial presentation was for a five year construction plan. She wanted to know what was the schedule and time frame.

Ms. Song said they would like to start construction next June when school is over and they are looking at one year, June 2003 to July 2004.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if that construction would be monitored by Town employees as current Town policy requires construction to be overseen by Town employees?

Mr. Robert Moore, Director of Planning, Zoning and Building replied no it would not because the School Board has its own Building Department. He continued that by State law they govern their own construction using the Florida Building Codes the

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same as the Town does.

Mrs. Coniglio wanted to know where the construction equipment would be located?

Ms. Song said that the School District is currently interviewing construction managers and in a month they will have a contract. She stated that their contractor, as soon as they are on board, will meet with the Town and go over the construction schedule and process. She said that at this moment there is no set plan.

Mrs. Coniglio said she assumed that demolishing the entire school site using huge machinery with construction taking place over a year would impact their Recreation Center.

Mrs. Coniglio said that since this is a workshop she hoped that Ms. Garrison would act as rumor control and asked if there was any possibility that the School Board or the architectural staff was considering the possible use of the tennis courts for building?

Ms. Garrison replied no she was not aware of any.

Mrs. Coniglio said that from the discussion it is obvious that this school is dated and unsafe but the proposed expansion directly impacts the essence of Palm Beach and asked if they could consider another use for this location?

Ms. Garrison said that as she mentioned earlier this School Board has already made the decision to modernize the school on its existing campus.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if there is a second option that would be palatable to the School Board for this location?

Mayor Smith said that she did not think Ms. Garrison was in a position to answer for the School Board. She stated that the Town doesn't know what the School Board is going to do.

Ms. Garrison said that the other thing to keep in mind is that they are already considering the possible divestiture of the west campus. She stated that this hasn't gone to the School Board yet but it is something that may happen in the near future.

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She said that already they have taken the Town's interests into consideration and that has been shown in the way they have approached this process and she stated that their efforts have been sincere.

Mrs. Coniglio said she understood but continued that it was not entirely accurate that everyone had input into these plans. She said it was very upsetting that the Commission appointed to guide the recreation activities was never informed after repeated requests to even see some kind of conceptual plan. She stated that it is the unanimous position of the Recreation Advisory Board that the Town Council of Palm Beach reject this school expansion plan for Palm Beach Public.

Mrs. Coniglio said that as a mother of six children, education is her highest priority and she has participated, along with many of her friends and neighbors who are present today, in supporting Palm Beach Public but it does not preclude her first love, the protection of their only Recreation Center. She said she sees the Recreation Center as the heartbeat of the Town of Palm Beach.

Mrs. Coniglio said she is interested in the flyer that she received which was sent to all families and members of the community directing families from Palm Beach Public and all those community members interested to be here for this workshop. She said that she could fill this whole room with residents who have called her with their concern and outrage. She stated that it was her personal position to fight this plan of expansion so that she can honestly attest to her fellow residents, families, friends and her children that the future of their recreation facility and fun were not compromised on her watch.

Mr. Ken Fishman, Alternate Member of the Recreational Advisory Commission, said that he is an organizer of one of the tennis groups that Mrs. Coniglio referred to and that he plays tennis at the facility seven days a week during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. He said he highly endorses all the statements Mrs. Coniglio made about how much they are against this project because it adversely impacts upon the wonderful recreational facilities in this Town. He stated that the present recreational facilities are characterized by the Recreation Department as adequate but needing more space, more green space, more open space, more fields, more parking. He stated that presently some children can be playing baseball while others are playing soccer. He mentioned that the Palm Beach Day School, the Palm Beach Public School and the residents of the Town can use this area simultaneously and that will

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not be possible on the basis of these revisions.

Mr. Fishman asked Ms. Garrison what percentage of the present students at Palm Beach Public School are residents of the Town?

Ms. Garrison replied that the principal said it was about five percent.

Mr. Fishman stated that he thought five percent was a high figure and that from what he has heard he thinks it is closer to three. He asked the principal if she would submit to the Town Attorney the names and addresses of all students who are residents of the island so they can be verified? He said that five percent is not a very high number, but despite the fact that only five percent of the children attending the school are residents of the Town of Palm Beach, there have not been any complaints made about the school over the years. He stated that the Recreation Department and the school work very well together along with Palm Beach Day School concerning recreation facilities. He said that now this proposed expansion puts a different light on it. He queried how this expansion plan helps the Town's residents and the answer is not at all because the answer is only five percent, maybe, of the Town's children attend that school.

Mr. Fishman said that query number two was why should the Town Council give their blessing to this proposed expansion, what good does it do for their constituents, the Town residents. His answer is none. He said this issue is of enormous importance as Mrs. Coniglio stressed because it involves the children that use the facilities now, future children and the adults who use it. He stated that the recreation facilities are being threatened and this is not a minor but a significant infringement on the recreation programs.

Mr. Fishman stated that the parking situation is dyer. He said that he walks over to the tennis courts everyday at 7:30 a.m. for his tennis group. He stated that at 7:30 there are no spaces available because they have been taken by the teachers of Palm Beach Public School and the teachers of Palm Beach Day School. He thinks that Mrs. Coniglio's point that the additional spaces will not be to our benefit is extremely well taken. He stated that the parking situation won't be any better.

Mr. Fishman said that, in summary, this expansion cannot be justified because it encroaches on the recreational facilities and in no way benefits our residents. He

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stated that he would like to see the landmark portions of the school maintained as landmarks, the rest of it moved, the land put up for bid possibly bought by the Town to enhance the recreation facilities. He stated that Mr. McDonald in an earlier council meeting had asked if the school was Town serving, and Mr. Fishman said he did not believe it was when the Town has a max of five percent of the children attending the school. He said that he believed it was the duty of the Town Council members to act in the best interests of the residents, and as the Mayor said at the beginning of this get together, the Town Council wants to do what benefits the residents. He said it would be outrageous to approve an expansion that could only adversely affect the Town's residents and would be a blatant disservice to the constituents whom they represent for any Council member to vote in favor of this.

James Gavigan, member of the Recreation Advisory Commission, said he thought the School Board did a great job in making their presentation, and in the ten years he has been on the commission, they have had a very nice relationship working well together. He said he has one point and that is the loss of the field space. He stepped up to the board and pointed out the present benefits of the Recreation Center for the Palm Beach Public School and the Palm Beach Day School. He stated that they actually have three fields, a basketball court, and a play area for minor children. He continued that four or five uses may be stretched out of it. He said that with this expansion two to three of those uses will be lost because there is no longer a play area for kids. He continued that the stands where people sit are lost.

Ms. Song said that the stands are staying.

Mr. Gavigan restated that the biggest problem is that it is a softball field to the Day School and a baseball field to the Recreation Center. He showed that when the baseball field is back, it is a legitimate field and it is not infringing on the football field but when it is moved out, as presented, the baseball field is halfway on the football field. He said baseball and football or baseball and soccer cannot be played at the same time. He continued that what has been done is to take away half the football field and move the baseball field a little. He felt that the Recreation Center's green space has really been lost and the program is not good.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if the covered atrium is just empty or if there was a playground facility in there?

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Ms. Song replied that it is open space.

Mrs. Coniglio wanted to know if there were any playground facilities within that design?

Ms. Song showed where the playground was.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if the Public School would continue to use the Town of Palm Beach playground?

Ms. Song replied that they spoke with the Director of Recreation who wanted to save the basketball court, and so the building that was to be closer was moved to the north to leave some space there.

Mrs. Coniglio stated that for recess there will be one playground for 420 kids. She questioned if that was where all the kids are going to be?

Ms. Song responded by pointing out a gym area and open space areas.

Mrs. Coniglio asked if the joint usage of that playground doesn't continue, where would the rest of the kids on that campus play?

Ms. Song replied that they would like to continue the joint use.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS - 3 MINUTE LIMIT PLEASE

Jane Baker, 235 Cocoanut Row, said she has lived on the corner of Cocoanut Row and Seaview for seventeen years and has some experience of what goes on in these locations. She mentioned she is also a business owner on Royal Palm Way. She said she was alarmed at the proposed expansion and intensification of use. She stated that some 400 children are being bused to this very small space of about two acres and wondered about the wisdom of that. She reported that according to the Department of Education's State of Florida Guidelines, an elementary school is required for 200 hundred students to have four acres and one acre is required for each additional 100 students. She stated that currently there are so many students trying to come into this area that State guidelines can never be met. She appealed to the School Board that

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the children deserve better than this and asked them not to spend money in this small space when there is space and great need elsewhere. She stated that for three years the construction that has been going on in this area has been horrendous and asked how much more can be done to them? She reiterated that the residents have had enough even though they do need the bridge and drainage and don't mind that, but she felt the need for expanding and intensifying the use of this school does not make any sense.

Ms. Baker had questions about the space for the cafeteria and the huge trucks that make deliveries several times a week early in the morning. She complained of waking up to revving motors, horrendous noise and stated that this plan places these delivery trucks again right beside her home on Seaview. She questioned the quality of life that she has along with the rest of the residents. She requested the School Board to rethink this plan because it is just unconscionable.

Ethel Kinsella, 243 Seaspray Avenue, said that she is amazed the size of the school has grown to be 414 students and might grow to 490 students. She stated that now when school opens and closes it takes her ten minutes to get out of Seaspray onto Cocoanut Row or to get onto County Road with the two schools. She said that the plan for the school buses is not going to alleviate this condition because traffic has to be stopped for the school buses to make the turn back out onto Royal Palm Way. She stated that if the school bus plan could be rethought, the school could be moved further east and it would not impact on the playing fields.

Ms. Kinsella said she also does not like the idea of a cafeteria on the corner of Seaview and Cocoanut because it is a residential area. She continued that she is strongly against an open air theater. She said she does hope that the Town Council considers putting a cap on the number of students that can come to this school because 414 is too large.

Eileen Berman stated that she is a member of the Academic Excellence Committee at Palm Beach Public School and has worked here in Palm Beach for the last eight years. She said that she wanted to discuss the children who attend Palm Beach Public School. She stated that in December of 2000, she addressed the Council to inform them that a group of local residents, professionals and parents formed an Academic Excellence Committee at Palm Beach Public School to increase the C grade given to the school by the State of Florida. She said that the Committee knew the Town

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Council would support their efforts to make what they consider a little gem on this island into something that everyone could be proud of. She reported that they achieved this goal and much more. She told that, over the past two years, they have trained over fifty tutors who volunteer their time working, one on one, with the students to improve their reading and math skills. She told of the donations that are received not only of time but of the considerable amounts of money from private foundations, from corporate foundations, from community groups and individuals who believe that public education is beneficial to the Town of Palm Beach. She reported that they have secured a grant to integrate the arts into the curriculum over a three-year period, and that Palm Beach Public is one of only two schools in the county to have this innovative program. She said that they have had tangible results from all they have done for the children and community. She reported that this past year they have raised the State awarded grade from a C to a B and felt that everyone should share in their pride in that achievement. She explained that because of all these things they felt that more residents could be attracted to the school. She said that more importantly are the strides which were made to enhance the lives and the love of learning in many of the students who attend the school who do not share all the advantages of the typical resident of Palm Beach. She stated that Palm Beach Public is a very special school with outstanding educators, a dedicated principal, Marilyn Brady and a committed community. She implored them not to abandon this beacon of learning because of playing fields, parking concerns or construction nuisances. She asked that they focus on the children and on the future.

Margaret Yansura, 714 Claremore Drive, West Palm Beach stated that she lives in a historic home that is on the national register and is familiar with as well as supportive of that philosophy. She mentioned that she had three children graduate from Palm Beach Public and go onto successful careers at Middle School of the Arts and the High School of the Arts. She advised that she has been very involved the last thirteen years and was head of the PTA and had started the Adopt-A-Class Program. She stated that it is an excellent school and doesn't know why only five percent of the students are from the Town of Palm Beach. She felt that it was not the school's problem but the residents of Palm Beach for not taking advantage of the excellent opportunities for education at Palm Beach Public.

Ms. Yansura asked how far they were moving the baseball field to the east?

Ms. Song replied about eighty-five feet.

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Ms. Yansura said that many people have talked about the school expanding but it has actually contracted. She stated that when her children went to Palm Beach Public there was over 600 children going there because it included the middle school. She said that the Town Council went with her to the School Board and fought to save it because it was looked upon as an asset. She continued that it has far less children in the last five years than it ever had before, and she does not see this as an expansion.

Ms. Yansura said that since the School Board is taking away the sport campus, some problems will be eliminated such as the children going across the street which requires a crossing guard. She stated that elementary children do not play intramural sports so they do not use the baseball field, and State curriculum does not provide for the older grades to have recess everyday. She reported that the very lower grades will only have recess if the teacher can use recess as time for large muscle development. She reported that she has never seen the ballfields used that much. She continued that while her children were in Palm Beach Public they belonged to the Recreation Center leagues; and during that time, she had never seen the various fields used simultaneously. She stated that she felt all the activities could continue with the new configuration.

Ms. Yansura stated that she is very familiar with the pavilion area which is a low lying green area and that when it rains it floods and the kids have never been able to play on it. She said she has never seen a lot of the kids play on that area which is right next to the pro shops and tennis courts. She mentioned that they generally played on the other side of the basketball court where there are picnic tables and the Rec Center staff can watch the kids there.

Ms. Yansura said that as a resident of a larger area than Palm Beach, she wanted to point out that they do share many things together regardless of their residence. She used as examples the intra coastal waterway, the beaches, the water supply shared through a joint use agreement as well as many County facilities. She stated that this makes us all larger than our local communities and this school is open and welcome to be used by the Town of Palm Beach and would encourage any parent to enroll children there.

Stephan A. Yeckes, registered architect doing business at 772 U.S. Highway 1, North Palm Beach for the past twenty-five years, stated that his wife is currently the physical

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education teacher at Palm Beach Public School and has been for the past fifteen years. He said that she has seniority and is able to leave for another school but cares for her job more than anything else because of the personal attention the students get regardless of where they come from.

Mr. Yeckes said that the arguments he heard today against the school were embarrassing to him as an American. He felt that to say why worry about students who are not from our Town is terrible. He stated that education is the number one goal of this country as well as ensuring that our children have nice schools to go to. He said it seemed to him that a philosophical decision has to be made whether to build the school or not build the school. He continued that if it is decided to build the school, it should be done properly and Young Song has one of the finest reputations as an architect in this Town. He said he would urge everyone to trust in her.

Mr. Bud Tamarkin, 120 Sunset Avenue, stated that one of the proudest things he has in Palm Beach is his Palm Beach Public School, and one of the proudest things he has done is to be a member of the Academic Excellence Committee. He said many things have been accomplished in this Town with regard to education. He stated that everyone must understand that this is a community and a community must have a school, a school for all people. He continued that if young people are attracted to move into this Town, and make this a wonderful Town, it must have a school. He stated that the things the Academic Excellence Committee is doing with the arts and art community and the things that are going to be accomplished in the next couple of years are going to make the Town of Palm Beach something to look forward to being a part of.

Lynn George, 249 Mockingbird Trail, said that most of the people have spoken to her concerns regarding the green space. She stated that now there is a joint use agreement that is renewable on an annual basis, and she understands that the School Board is volunteering to continue to share with the Town the area that will be fenced off. She asked for a description of the play area that is jointly shared and wanted to know if the play area of the pavilion is going to be made of concrete and covered?

Ms. George said that the only other question she had was if a traffic survey was done and was there access to it and did it indicate that the Town needed more traffic on this street? She mentioned that she was not able to access the survey.

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Ms. George questioned if the requirements that the State has regarding green space and play areas and so much square footage for a school, are not applicable here or are they not real requirements?

Ms. Garrison replied that to her first question about State requirements, the School Board develops educational specifications for each school before it is either built or modernized, and in this case, the one developed is consistent with all State requirements. She stated that the play areas and spaces that Young Song mentioned earlier do meet all State requirements. She said she wasn't sure which play area Ms. George was talking about because there are several.

Ms. George replied that she is speaking to what was referred to as a play area that is a covered pavilion. She asked if there will be seats there or is it just going to be a protected pavilion that will basically take away green space, will it be concrete and will it take away from being used jointly?

Ms. Garrison said she believed it was the covered play area that is part of their educational specifications. She stated that because of all the concerns about melanoma, the plan provides a space where teachers can hold outdoor activities out of the sun and that can be used for a wide variety of things. She continued that typically it is just a concrete pad which includes a storage area for play equipment, most of which is moveable. She said they would be open to talking about some sort of access to this so the Town could continue to share that. She noted that it is a handy thing to have for certain kinds of activities.

Ms. George asked if they were offering to share the fenced off play area that is a concreted pavilion and the ten new parking places in that area after the school is finished for the day? She asked if the School Board felt the Town could have a soccer/football field that is safe despite the fact that it will be worn from the use of it by a baseball team. She said she did not think that the schools or the Town would legally want to take responsibility for someone getting hurt on this joint use baseball field with soccer and lacrosse taking place there. She asked again if they plan to share the parking places, the new stage and the concreted pavilion?

Ms. Garrison said the whole facility would be open to Town use subject to supervision. She said she was just highlighting the things she thought the Town would desire the most.

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Margie Lewandowski, 306 Pendleton Lane, said that this issue is really contentious and hopes that everyone does not take it personally. She stated that the Recreation Center is something everyone uses, and she would hate to see it compromised in any way. She said that she is curious about the traffic study. She asked how many children ride the school bus?

Marilyn Brady, Principal of Palm Beach Public responded that there were 240.

Ms. Lewandowski asked if that meant the balance of the 414 were brought to school in individual cars?

Ms. Garrison, after asking Ms. Brady, responded that there was some.

Ms. Lewandowski stated that there was a considerable amount of traffic there without increasing the school by an additional twenty-five students or whatever.

Ms. Lewandowski asked how long the children are on the school bus?

Ms. Garrison responded that she didn't think it could be very long because they were just over the bridge in West Palm Beach. She said she could show them after the meeting the boundary of the school, if they wished to stay. She stated that it was all of Palm Beach and then across the bridge and in an area of West Palm Beach which is the boundary.

Ms. Lewandowski wanted to know how many spaces are required for the staff of the public school?

Ms. Garrison said that the Town's code is thirty-five spaces, and currently the school has twenty-three.

Ms. Lewandowski asked if there were twenty-three people who drive that need to be there with the administration and the staff? She asked again how many are required for the current staff that is at the school?

Ms. Brady said it was between forty to forty-eight spaces.

Ms. Lewandowski asked how many members are there that tutor from the Academic

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Excellence Committee?

Ms. Brady said that on any given day five or six tutors.

Ms. Lewandowski wanted to know if the proposed expansion of this facility is not approved by the Town Council and the School Board cannot proceed, will the State condemn this facility or would it be abandoned and a new building built some place else?

Ms. Garrison said the building has not been condemned.

Ms. Lewandowski asked if the physical plan meets the State standards right now?

Ms. Garrison said that it did not, but it is not in anyway unauthorized. She said it doesn't meet the current standards and explained that rules change all the time just like zoning rules and the things that already exist are grandfathered as long as they are safe.

Ms. Lewandowski asked if the Board of Education had an alternate plan if this was not approved, and asked what options there were?

Ms. Garrison said that the plan is for the school to be modernized and this plan was adopted by the School Board on September 9th.

Dick Kleid, 2660 South Ocean Boulevard, said that he thought a public school system is fundamental to a democracy and that it is important for the Town of Palm Beach to be supportive of public schools. He said that to be opposed to a school in the Town will invite cries of elitism and rightfully so. He stated that the children will be deprived of the Palm Beach environment and the dedicated tutors will suffer. He urged the Town Council to work towards accommodating a public school in Palm Beach.

Steven Trezise, local architect with an office 1717 North Flagler Drive, said he is the grandson of Gus Maas architect of portions of the east and west campus. He concurred with Mrs. Hoffman that some buildings need to go for the greater good. He said that the space is needed. He thanked the Mayor and Town Council for their constant pledge of support for the school and for working with the School Board. He

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mentioned that his daughter is in second grade there, and he is currently PTA President. He said that they need to stay focused on improving the school and what really needs to happen is to stop the arguing, and stop the teachers and parents from having to look over their shoulders worrying about whether there will be a school here. He stated that the School Board has made their decision and everyone should rally behind that decision and reinforce it and continue the school in its upward path to an A grade. He said that it is understandable that it is hard for the Recreation Advisory Commission to give up something they have had use of for years. He said no one likes to do that.

Mr. Trezise stated that he has been involved in the selection process from day one. He felt the reason that Young Song was selected was her skillful handling of the site circulation which includes parent/bus pick up and drop off, parking, development of service parking and the separation of the two. He said it was the only solution out of the four that addressed proper site circulation.

Mr. Trezise said that he lives on Singer Island and brings his child here everyday for school because he appreciates the quality of the school and the education she is getting. He said that three days a week he drops his daughter off in the morning for violin classes. He stated that there are twenty to forty cars fewer on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Friday mornings. He said parents drop their children off early for music classes that begin at 7:00 not 8:00. He stated that there are after school activities so the mass of cars is mitigated by staggering of people arriving to pick up and drop off their children. He reported that on Mondays and Wednesdays he arrives at the normal time and has not experienced any immense problems with parking, and he has been doing it for three years now. He stated that the parking problems have always been there and it has always been resolved and worked out by people coexisting. He said that as it has been pointed out, there are two hundred students less than there were five years ago.

Mr. Trezise said the contention that you can't coexist seemed obstructionist to him with regard to the ballfield. He continued that there are many stadiums designed for use of two professional teams. He stated that they change from a football field to a baseball field to a soccer field and back all in the same space. He said that it is a logistics and a scheduling problem. He felt that could be addressed instead of saying let's remove the school because the ballfield cannot be used properly. He said that hopefully by working together the school issue could be settled, stop the rumor mills,

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and concentrate on becoming an A school. He stated that instead of tearing it down, he would like to see everyone gather around and support it.

Mr. Trezise said that the Town's unique character enhances this school and provides an example for students who are not from this area. He stated that it is an environment that needs to be enhanced and preserved. He felt that the Recreation Advisory Commission, Palm Beach Public School and Palm Beach Day School can coexist and work together through logistics and proper planning.

Lina Balasco, 136 Woodbridge Road, said her daughter has attended Palm Beach Public from kindergarten through fifth grade and is now at Middle School of the Arts. She mentioned that her daughter plays viola, and she credits the wonderful strings program at Palm Beach Public for her acceptance to the Middle School of the Arts. She said that many children come from all over just to attend this program.

Ms. Balasco mentioned how the Town has supported the school in so many ways and so many levels. She said that she is also a member of the Academic Excellence Committee.

Ms. Balasco said that as a resident she knows the importance of the green space and felt there are solutions for everything and there is a solution for this too.

Ms. Balasco said that everyone is talking about building the school on the east campus and wondered why it could not be built on both sides. She said that she heard it said there is a law against this but reported that a brand new school, Palmetto Elementary, was built on two sides of the road. She said she heard discussion about how a school usually requires fifteen acres to build but now it is planned on much less. She felt that if concessions are being made then it should be built on both sides because that would alleviate the problem of using up the green space.

Ms. Balasco said that the Recreation Center is paid by the Town and it has been wonderful in so many ways and very generous through the years. She stated that it has chosen to share that space with Palm Beach Public, and she did not want to make enemies with them. She said that the green space is very important here and there was no reason construction could not take place on the west side around the landmarked building. She stated that the building could be reinforced, build further. She continued that there is a gymnasium there that the children use eliminating the need for an open

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air theater. She said that the gymnasium is wonderful and there is no need to tear it down just because other elementary schools don't have it.

Ms. Garrison stated that they are not tearing down the gymnasium.

Ms. Balasco said that it is very important to teach the children about maintaining our heritage and our history and not be hypocrites. She stated that Palm Beach Public has embraced the arts in so many ways and it could be made into a school of fine arts and then many residents would want to come. She said her daughter is one of the five percent of residents who attend the school here.

Ms Balasco said she wanted to point out that the crossing guard is paid by the Town.

Mayor Smith stated she did not believe that anyone speaking here today, whether for the school or against it, is against the children and this is a very important point. She said the bottom line here is for the children and their education.

The Mayor said that she spoke to the third grade class today comprised of sixty children, and during the question and answer period, one of the little boys asked if she had ever been shot at. She said that she told him no because Palm Beach is a very safe place to live and go to school and that would never happen here. She said that the little boy told her he knows that because his mother told him that is why she sends him here from Riviera Beach. Mayor Smith said that there is that side of it with the children being very aware of the safety and security. She stated the interaction with the police and the firemen gives them a very broad education.

Mayor Smith said that, as the question of the green space and playing fields are considered, which she believed was the big question, the traffic pattern could be worked out. She said to remember what is best for the children.

Beth Cole, 1193 North Lake Way, said that she completely agrees with the Mayor and was just getting ready to make the same point. She stated that there may be people for the expansion and who support all the wonderful things that have happened in the public school who start turning this into a Palm Beach elitist versus non resident issue. She said that she thinks a lot of the people opposing this expansion are doing it out of a sincere concern for the children who attend that school. She stated that they are trying to make the school meet new standards that were not in effect when the school

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was built, obviously. She said that she did not expect that the standards would go down but would only increase. She asked how far to go trying to cram more onto this site that is one seventh the size of a school that the Board would build now? She said it is just hard for a lot of people to understand how that is in the best interest of the children. She stated that she has heard all the wonderful things about the strings programs and all the other wonderful programs. She said she hasn't heard any arguments for why these programs can only happen on that site. She wanted to know why, if the children were moved to a different site, all those wonderful programs would not continue to happen. She stated that it made no sense to her that the school had to be there. She said that people who are opposing this are not doing so out of selfishness or because they don't want all those West Palm Beach people over here. She stated that they are looking at how crowded that whole school area is and how little green space there is and it just doesn't seem to make sense to cram more there.

Ms. Cole said that the Rec Center is not just used by Palm Beach residents but by a very large number of people who are coming over the bridge. She felt it didn't do the West Palm Beach people or the Palm Beach people any good who use the Rec Center to have heavily utilized space decreased. She stated that there are very few playgrounds in driving distance for use by small children and would not like to see the play area that has swings and a play structure taken away to put a concrete pad there.

Ms. Garrison said that is not where it is going to be.

Ms. Cole said she misunderstood that point. She stated that the elitism charge is very unfair to the people who are opposing this expansion.

Ms. Cole asked what happens to all the children attending that school during the construction?

Ms. Garrison replied that they have a holding school which is a brand new school called Benoist Farms Elementary School on Okeechobee and the students for one year will be attending that school.

Ms. Cole wanted to know how big that site is?

Ms. Garrison said she didn't know but with the western schools there is always the luxury of more land.

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Ms. Cole asked what the cost of the proposed expansion would be?

Ms. Garrison replied that it is not an expansion and would like to address that point. She said it is a program that brings spaces up to standards. She stated that classrooms now tend to be bigger, and they tend to provide more of a variety of spaces than they used to. She said it is a qualitative question.

Ms. Cole said that as she understands it the School Board is adding space by adding the theater, and it is a bigger foot print for the area.

Ms. Garrison said that they are adding square footage.

Ms. Cole said that students are being added and the building is expanded, and from that standpoint, it is an expansion.

Ms. Garrison said that directly to the question, the budget of this project is \$8 million.

Ms. Cole asked if the School Board builds a new elementary school what is the typical budget for that?

Ms. Garrison said that probably it is about \$10 million and asked Ms. Song if that included the land?

Ms. Song replied that sometimes when talking about project costs there is a little confusion. She said that the \$8 million is construction cost budget for this school. She said that if you want to compare apples to apples, the Boca Raton Elementary School is a 4 ½ acre school which was just opened and it cost \$7 million, construction costs.

Ms. Cole asked what the total cost with buying the land is?

Ms. Garrison said it depends on the location.

Ms. Cole said that the only point she is trying to make is that a lot of people don't feel that it makes sense to throw \$8 million at a site that is one seventh the size of what the School Board would like to have. She said that rather than putting that money into a site and bringing it up to current requirements, why not put that money into a site that will take these students into the future and meet future requirements?

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She stated that is the question a lot of the residents don't feel has been answered. She reiterated that the county is growing and will continue to grow so why it is necessary to put this money into this substandard site?

Ms. Garrison said that they are not here today to talk about that, but she shared those thoughts when she first started out until she learned about the school. She said that she doesn't know if any other elementary school in this county, has the kind of community support that this one does. She said it is an intangible value that is placed on it.

Ms. Cole said she hopes the school, if it happens to be placed somewhere else, would not lose that support and community spirit. She stated she still has not been told why it has to be right there, but the dialogue should be positive with everybody considering the needs of the children in the school.

Gail Coniglio said she just wanted to readdress a prominent consideration. She said that she is fortunate to have utilized public education because her daughter is a talented dancer. She said that she, as well as the community, have financially supported the PTA of Palm Beach Public, its orchestra and art programs. She felt the movement of the baseball field creates a slippery surface for the continued use of soccer and lacrosse field users and said she believes it is dangerous. She stated that she and the entire Recreation Advisory Board are not opposed to the existence of Palm Beach Public but only its negative impact and the infringement on the Town use of the recreation facility and stated it should be kept the way it is.

Paul Arnold, 3408 Lexington Road, West Palm Beach said that his two children graduated from Palm Beach Public. He said his daughter graduated three years ago and must drive by the school once a week because she misses it. He stated that was what the school did for her, and he didn't care how old the school was but felt that what the students were given there was wonderful. He said that you have to realize what a wonderful group of people teach there. He stated that Palm Beach Public is not just the land it's on but it is everything that is in Palm Beach. He said the children can leave the school and walk to the Flagler Museum, or go to the ocean and study many things that are readily available. He said perhaps everyone is underestimating the Town of Palm Beach which is one of the great art places. He stated it is not just the little acreage it sits upon.

Mr. Arnold said what about erecting a pedestrian bridge that goes from one side to the

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other or build three stories and put one that goes over the top of Cocconut Row. He stated that there are all kinds of opportunities. He said that because the school is so small, consider making it something like an art school. He said that there are all kinds of possibilities out there and asked them not to take the opportunity away for kids to come and really get something special at a school that is unique. He said he wished all the kids could have but stated they can't. He said they should not take away what is so good for the community and for the children.

Judy Hoffman asked what is the present square footage of the east campus building and what will the future square footage be when it is two story total?

Ms. Song said presently it is 38,889 square feet and the proposed new campus including existing media center is 67,000 square feet. She said that the foot print will remain the same square footage but a second story will be added which will increase it. She stated that in terms of the foot print there will not be any additional square footage added to it.

Ms. Hoffman stated that it is still an increase in square footage.

Ms. Song said it includes a second floor. She stated that in terms of open space and green space that has been discussed today it is the same square footage.

Ms. Hoffman said that it is a big jump.

Suzanne Jones, resides at 4206 Washington Road, West Palm Beach and her business address is 337 Worth Avenue. She stated that she is a member of the Academic Excellence Committee and is a parent of a fifth grade student. She said she is here to challenge Mr. Pandula, the Recreation Center and the Town of Palm Beach. She said she saw a neighborhood where they fought a convention center for a buffer zone, and she saw the nasty fights, and she saw the positive and the negative. She stated that they worked together and got a buffer zone and a convention center and everyone won. She said that she is challenging everyone who has bad taste and good taste to come together and make this school happen. She felt the reason many Palm Beach residents do not attend Palm Beach Public is because it needs to be renovated and cleaned up. She stated that if that school was clean, more people would want to go to that school. She said that the school has been on the island for 81 years and there was a time when children only went to Palm Beach Public. She asked them to make

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Palm Beach Public the school that it should be.

Ann Blades, Town of Palm Beach Landmarks Commission, asked where the hearing goes from here? She wanted to know if it went to Landmarks for them to review because there is demolition of a landmarked building involved or does the Town Council rule on it first?

Mr. Randolph, Town Attorney, stated that he did not think the Town has decided where it goes first. He said that it was hoped the purpose of this meeting would eliminate the question of where it goes first, because there would be input from Landmarks and from the Town Council at the same time. He said a decision then could be made of where it will go from here. He stated that he did not think a decision has been made.

Ms. Blades asked when will the decision be made?

Mr. Randolph said he doesn't have the answer to that.

President Brooks thanked everyone and then asked the Town Council members for their input.

Mr. McLendon said that there were good comments from both sides of the issue. He stated that he did not agree at all with the State Education Department's requirement that kindergarten, first and second grades must have their classrooms on the first floor. He said that a better solution, as well as making better use of the site, would be by adding an extra story.

Mr. McLendon asked if the children would be out on Okeechobee or Jog Road during the construction?

Ms. Garrison said Okeechobee and Benoist Farms Road.

Mr. McLendon said that he has concerns about the wonderful tutors who volunteer their time, and wondered if they would remain committed and continue to make that trek. He asked how many volunteers will be lost? He said that he thinks the arts program is doing a great job. He stated that he would be surprised if the construction is done in fifteen months as is predicted.

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Mr. McLendon said that finally he didn't think the Council is authorized to make this decision, and the School Board can put the school wherever it wants to put it.

Mr. Goldblum said that he studied this before the meeting, and after listening to everybody, he feels the biggest point of contention is between baseball and football. He stated that as he understands it, the field cannot accommodate both, but he knows that there are many sports teams using stadiums in the United States that do accommodate both. He said he would like to see that worked out some way so both sports could be accommodated on the same field. He said that the new school building is only going up to the boundary of the property they own, and he would like to see that they not encroach on any of the tennis courts or on anything except the ballfield for lacrosse, football and baseball. He felt that there could be some accommodations made if the proper people are used to design that field. He stated that there were comments that a fence would have to be around it and it would look like a prison. He stated there is a fence around the property now that is covered by hedges.

Mr. Goldblum said that he knows by having the school building here it provides many more qualities for students, and deep in his heart, he felt that they are doing good for the best of students in the total community and the community is more than just the island of Palm Beach.

President Brooks said that if we use just a moment of reflection as we go through life, there is a very normal temptation to assume an either/or position which is a normal type of thing. He said that a challenge was mentioned, and he wanted to throw a challenge out that either/or is only valid when talking about something that is grossly immoral or unethical. He stated that he thought it would serve them all better as a community if they both took a position.

President Brooks said that there were wonderful comments from the Recreation Advisory Committee and very valid observations spearheaded by their Chairperson, Mrs. Coniglio. He said that they heard the professional input coming from Landmarks under their Chairman, Mr. Pandula, and they heard very nice, good productive comments from the public. He said that as the Mayor pointed out, everyone is concerned about the children.

President Brooks said to Ms. Song, Ms. Garrison and the representatives of the School

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Board that he didn't know if the recommendation of looking at some parcel on the west side of Cocoanut is valid or doable, but maybe they could be concerned about it. He stated that he didn't know if a bridge over Cocoanut Row would pass, but he would like to have these points looked at. He said he always believed in full disclosure and stated that he had never spent a day of his life in a public school having always attended Catholic schools. He said that he firmly believes that what made America was the public school system. He stated that when children of immigrants came to this country and parents had fears and trepidations especially with the establishment of the time, it was the public school that produced productive citizens that became our doctors, lawyers, architects, engineers and our teachers. He said they should try to look at this as a bullpen situation and take all of the good that was received today and build on it.

Mayor Smith stated that she had made her remarks throughout the meeting. She said that today was the first meeting with the commissions involved, and it is the first time that the plans were presented to all those present. She continued they are seeing them after various comments were made, and the plans have been massaged. She stated she still did not think they were perfect and could be squeezed a little bit more and changed. She said that it is not the decision of herself or the council sitting here today.

Mayor Smith addressed Mrs. Blades and said that it was her understanding that the next step was for these plans to go to the Landmark Commission. She stated that obviously they had not discussed architecture or what should be saved or Mr. Pandula's concerns about which building should be saved, if it is the northeast building or how it could be done. She said as she understands from the school representatives, Ms. Song and Ms. Garrison that they will go along with that.

Mayor Smith stated that everyone knows how she feels about the school and hoped that a reasonable compromise could be worked out if it is determined by the School Board to go ahead with this.

Mayor Smith said someone mentioned to her think of the money that will be saved if we do not have the school on the island. She said they shouldn't think that the School Board is going to take that forty-four cents paid to them out of every tax dollar and give it back to Palm Beach, the answer is no. She said if they take the school away, residents will still be paying forty-four cents out of every dollar to the School Board, and the Town won't have one public school child on this island which

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would be a tremendous loss to the backbone of the community.

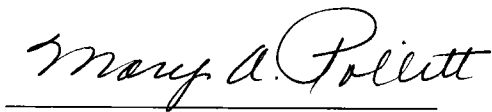
Peter Elwell, Town Manager, said he wanted to clarify the question of where the project goes from here. He stated that Mr. Randolph had pointed out earlier in the meeting that when a school district is looking to develop or redevelop property, there are State Statutes that specifically govern what that process is. He said that the Town has to adjust its normal local processes to reflect those State regulations and if this was a normal private landmark property, zoning matters would first be considered at Town Council and then design matters would be considered at the Landmarks Commission.

Mr. Elwell thought it would be more productive, in this instance, because of the State Regulations and a ninety-day time line, for the Town to follow the formal consideration of what the school district will be submitting to them, it is believed, shortly following this meeting at the Landmarks Commission first. He said the Landmarks Preservation Commission would then give the Town Council formal advice which the Mayor and Town Council would consider at a future meeting or meetings. He stated that they would look at a formal, final proposed site plan for usage of this site. He said that clearly there would be input from the Recreation Advisory Commission and from the public further in this process to make sure that those who have participated here today and expressed various view points would continue to be involved in the discussions before any final decisions are made about the application.

President Brooks adjourned the Workshop at 12:25 p.m.



William J. Brooks, President



Mary A. Pollitt, Town Clerk

Prepared by:
Diane Kassover, Town Clerk Secretary