

Grand Island School Board to look closer at capital project schematics

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After hearing a progress report on the \$51.4 million capital project Monday, the Grand Island School Board said it would like a closer look at the schematics.

That informal consensus among the five members in attendance followed comments from board members David Goris and Tak Nobumoto that the board should have input on the preliminary schematics that precede the design development phase.

Goris, the board president, said he is “not in favor of” the preliminary curved design of the technology addition planned for the front of the High School-Middle School complex on Ransom Road. He said it doesn’t “fit the look” of the existing campus.

Nobumoto said he wants to ensure that district residents have an opportunity for input at this early stage. Thomas R. Caruso, vice president of Campus Construction, the project managers, urged the board to “have an open mind and let the design professionals bring you something that ties it all together.”

William K. Zografos, vice president of Cannon Design, the project’s architect, said he would have the design schematics, without cost estimates being prepared by Campus Construction, for the June 4 board meeting. Superintendent Robert Christmann emphasized that district residents should attend the June 4 meeting to view the schematics.

Zografos and Kim Williams, an architecture associate at Cannon, gave an illustrated overview of floor plans for all five schools, emphasizing that staff comments derived from four meetings at each school were taken into account by the firm in drawing up the schematics. Construction on the two-year project is expected to start in the spring 2013.

In a related matter, the board voted to narrow the focus of three possible sites for a new bus transportation center to one — Sidway Elementary School on Baseline Road, site of the current center.

Tentatively, a new 16,000- square-foot building would be built to the rear of the school's 27-acre site. It would be accessed from a new road built to the left of the athletic fields bordering St. Martin in the Fields Church. Wendel Duchscherer Engineers & Architects did an operational efficiency study of all three sites as required by the state Education Department. The other sites, both owned by the town, are 13.9 acres on Stony Point Road south of Whitehaven Road and 18.7 acres on Whitehaven Road behind the water tower.

The district has set aside \$800,000 in its capital reserve fund for the project, which is subject to a public referendum, expected to be held in December.