

Rainier Beach High School Departure
June 26, 2008
7:00pm - 8:30pm

Attendees:

Stella Powell
Raymond Anderson
Rita Green
Bryon Tello
Greg Anderson
Sandra Fillmore
Gregory Davis
LaVern Phillips
Michael Schtak

City Staff

Thao Tran
Tamara Garrett
Sharon Star

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting convened at 7:18pm. Thao Tran welcomed all in attendance and request that everyone introduce themselves. He proceeded with saying he is a non-voting member and Tamara Garrett said she too was a non-voting member.

Overview of School Departure Process

Thao Tran distributed a two page handout of information describing the school departure process that also explained the responsibilities of the committee members. He said the meeting would be recorded and minutes taken which will be part of the public record and incorporated into the final report.

The key responsibility of the committee members is to listen to the overall project and the proposed renovations but more importantly to listen to the departure request before making a recommendation. Rolluda Architects will give more details. Here to address a request from Seattle Public Schools to Department of Planning and Development (DPD) to replace the outdoor sign. The current sign is currently outdated and will be replaced with a modern backlit. There are not a lot of changes other than the technology. We are keeping the same height and frame.

Overview of Proposed Departure to Rainier High School

Michael Schtak gave a brief description of the school and what is happening to it now. Proceeded to speak about the current reader board is outdated and does not provide for multiple messages given the amount of space that they have and the letters are being physically placed and removed daily. It is not very efficient for getting messages out to the public. Currently we have on our agenda a proposal to install a new electric backlit reader board and are working on getting the permit through DPD to get the installation permit. The sign is a backlit fixed light bulb reader board that will utilize the same existing pole. It is located on

Henderson Street and our intent is to switch out the electronic reader board with the new board by pulling out the old one and placing the new one in its place. Conduit will be installed to the reader board to feed back to the office area. The principle will be able to type in quickly the messages he wants to get out to community. We think it's a good way for the school to stay in touch with the community and advertise community events that are held at school.

Sandra Fillmore spoke about replacement and that what they have is more current, efficient, and user friendly. In addition, she said the new sign comes with a user friendly software – the school can program the software so that the sign can be turned off at night while different messages can be displayed with controlled shut off time. The new sign has the same dimensions of the current sign if not a little smaller, it's 7ft by 7.5ft. The school and community will be very pleased with it.

Rita Green asked about the shut off time. Sandra Fillmore said that it has a shut off feature around 9:00 or 10:00. Michael Shtak also stated that other schools have it set for 10:00pm.

Gregory Anderson asked if the message would be blinking? Bryon Tello stated that it could be either as it can relay messages seven different ways much like a PowerPoint. The board can even do video type information and automatically dims from day to night using the most efficient power light source. The board will not be distracting to drivers or nearby residents. It is not 100% bright at 10:00am when it doesn't need to be. LaVern Phillips asked about the cost for this item? Is this being donated to us? Michael Shtak answered that it is part of the Building, Technology and Academics Levy (BTA). All the upgrades done now are included and this is just one part of it.

Ray Anderson asked what is meant by the statement that "they wanted it"? Michael Shtak answered that the capital levy group convened with the principal, teachers, administration and one student. The group initially went to other schools and looked at different upgrades that had been done, whether it was signs, classrooms, or culinary arts. They took pictures of what they liked to see in their own school and when our next meeting was convened they talked about the improvements that they would like to see at Rainier Beach. Our group had seven meetings over a seven or eight month period. We moved down to a long range plan for the school. The plan may be presented at the next BEX Capital Project Levy and as well as the scope of work happening today. There has been good effort and response from staff and teachers here at the school.

Ray Anderson also asked about who was responsible for the maintenance of the sign? Michael said that the school would be responsible for the sign, we have a low voltage, electrical staff, roofers, and we have a full complement of maintenance staff to handle any problems. Bryon Tello stated that the sign comes with a five year warranty and the average expectancy of LED is 11,000

hours which is 11 years of continuous running which demonstrates that the light is very efficient on longevity.

Greg Anderson asked about keeping the shell of the existing sign. Mike Shtak said the pole stays and the inside will be replaced. Conduit will run from building to pole.

Sandra Fillmore gave the measurements of the new one to be 7 x 7.5 ft and the old is 7 x 8.6 ft.

A question was asked why is it smaller than the old one? Mike Shtak said it scrolls across and not limited by the footprint of the sign and that many messages can be displayed at once.

Gregory Anderson asked about the departure? Thao Tran replied Seattle Municipal code doesn't have a zone just for schools. Schools are located in residential neighborhoods, they have a built in process that if you want to do a change with the school you have to get community input with advisory comments to document and incorporate community concerns and participation. Tamara Garrett stated why departures are required for this particular sign is that this school is located in two different zones, one is the residential zone and this allows for electronic reader sign and they are a lot smaller.

Gregory Anderson asked if this reader board was maintenance free and what is the maintenance time? If it needs maintenance, Rainier Beach High School (RB) has staff that will look at it as well as call it in to have it repaired. Bryon Tello said that they have a response time under three days.

Gregory Anderson asked about the brightness of the sign and that some might not like it? Mike Shtak responded that the sign is East to West and does not face community housing. Bryon Tello added it is not like a flood light, it glows and is smaller with less impact. Because the sign is perpendicular to the community, residents across the street will not see the sign. Mike Shtak said that in regards to operation time, they will be turned on at 6:45 am and off at 10:00 pm.

A general question to attendees is what people think? Most like it a lot better than what is there now. Mike said that time was spent on making sure that it has the RB logo. Mike stated that you can rapidly change the message and have different events at the same time. It enhances the community connection between the school and neighborhood.

Ray Anderson asked about the covering over the sign. Bryon Tello said this sign has a polycarbonate plastic, which is technically unbreakable. It is very durable. This unit communicates with only one computer and it has a lock. The principal has control of it.

Question was asked about how easily replace if damaged? Bryon Tello said that if broken LED come in panels 18 x 18 and they are replaced so they plug and play. A booklet was passed around to see what Bryon Tello was speaking about.

Committee Decision

Rita Green motioned to approve the Rainier Beach High School departure and Stella Powell seconded the motion.

Motion:

Pass – Unanimous

Objections - None

Tamara Garrett reminded that they needed to decide whether it is a minor or a major departure.

Ray Anderson motion for the Rainier Beach Departure to be a minor departure and LaVern Phillips seconded the motion.

Motion:

Pass - All

Objections – None

Thao Tran then asked about if they wanted any conditions to be included. Gregory asked if their have been other negative issues with this. Mike Schtack stated that the 10:00pm cut-off time. Biggest concern is the sign flashing all night long. Stella Powell stated that this should be open to school decisions.

Discussion on what if this is exclusive use only for the school. Mike stated that no commercial advertisements are allowed. Open to community events and school events.

Thao Tran spoke about the value of the sign for the school outweighs the impacts to the neighborhoods. Which they agreed upon.

Ray Anderson ask schools that have comparable signs if the costs are equal or are you over extending for this school alone? Is there a report of the research done with costs to the other signs and approved by the School Board. Mike Schtak stated that they tried to match the existing sign to be comparable to other high schools. Bryon Tello said this can run one message at one time. Thao asked if the cost of the sign is the same to other schools. Mike answered that Foster High School was done two years ago with relatively the same cost. Thao Tran then asked if there were comments from the public.

No public comment. Meeting adjourned at 7:56pm.