

***APPROVED INFORMAL MINUTES*** of  
the Joint Meeting of the City Council of the City of  
Rye and the Board of Education of the City of Rye  
held at Rye Middle School on April 12, 2008 at 9:00  
A.M.

PRESENT:

STEVEN OTIS, Mayor  
ANDREW C. BALL  
MACK CUNNINGHAM  
PAULA J. GAMACHE  
CATHERINE F. PARKER  
GEORGE S. PRATT  
JOSEPH A. SACK  
Councilmembers

JAMES C. CULYER, President  
JOSHUA C. NATHAN, Vice President  
KENDALL EAGAN  
EDWARD FOX  
LAURA SLACK  
ROBERT R. ZAHM  
Board Members

EDWARD SHINE, Superintendent of Schools  
O. PAUL SHEW, City Manager  
SCOTT PICKUP, Assistant City Manager  
WILLIAM CONNORS, Police Commissioner  
WILLIAM RODRIGUEZ, Recreation Dept. Supervisor  
BRIAN DEMPSEY, Chair, Traffic and Transportation Committee

ABSENT:     GEORGE CADY, Board Member

Board President James Culyer called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The City Clerk called the roll for both boards.

1.     Traffic and Safety

Mr. Culyer asked Mayor Otis to give an overview on what the City has done in connection with the topic of discussion. The Mayor said that the City has a long history of working with the schools on the issues of traffic and safety. A joint study was conducted by Traffic and Transportation Committee Chair Brian Dempsey's firm TRC Engineers, Inc. in 2000-01 and the study has been updated recently in order to look for solutions for flow and drop off patterns on campuses. The City has joined with the YMCA and other organizations in the Activate America Program and created the Temporary Trails and Traffic Safety Committee that

applied for a grant from the Safe Routes to School Program. The City Council also decided to divide the Post Road Diet project into three sections in order to accelerate the work on the section closest to the High School. He said the City is concerned with minimizing children crossing streets and wants to work with the School District on having them dropped off on campus or on a street abutting the campus. Mr. Culyer said the School District is cognizant of student safety and it has been a consideration in every school renovation project because once the children are on campus they are the school's responsibility.

Brian Dempsey said that his firm performed traffic counts in the area of the Middle School/High School and it has been determined that there is a 15 minute problem around the schools in the morning at drop off time and in the afternoon at dismissal time. Since no one other than staff can enter the school property after 7:30 a.m. and most of the drop off zone is not used, traffic backs up onto the Post Road for approximately ten minutes. The Police Officer or Parking Enforcement Officer at the Milton Road/Apawamis Avenue intersection currently directs traffic from four directions and parents continue to drop children off in the middle of Milton Road. Mr. Dempsey then presented two options for changing traffic flow patterns around the Middle School/High School during drop off and pick up times. Both plans call for an expansion of the current drop off area on Parsons Street; the addition of bollards on Milton Road at Apawamis Avenue; prohibition of left turns from Apawamis Avenue onto Milton Road; the addition of a crosswalk on Apawamis Avenue and construction of a right turn slip ramp onto Milton Road beyond the tennis courts. The plans differ in the following ways:

Option "A" would:

- Allow traffic into and out of the Middle School parking lot entrance on Parsons Street;
- Reverse the flow of traffic into the school property at Milton Road.

Option "B" would:

- Drop off traffic on Parsons Street would enter and exit at different locations;
- Create a new driveway on Milton Road that would maintain the current traffic pattern at the Milton/Apawamis area.

Mr. Dempsey also noted that no matter what is done, there would always be congestion with cars. He suggested encouraging children to walk and bicycle to school at a younger age and also to arrive at school earlier when there is less traffic. Dr. Shine said that the Safe Routes Committee is encouraging a return to children walking to school. He said children now walk through the parking lots to get to the buildings and this must be considered if drop off on campus is increased. He warned that traffic and pedestrian safety must be considered together when considering options.

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised:

- The School District is not in a position to consider staggered scheduling;
- The School Board must be given latitude to fix on-campus issues;
- Changing traffic flow patterns is a "painful process" that must be accompanied by education and enforcement;

- Moving the tennis court to the roof of the gym could open up additional space for inclusion in a possible traffic remedy;
- The City can install crosswalks and signage;
- The City has already implemented a police/parking enforcement officer presence at Milton/Apawamis intersection and is proceeding with the Boston Post Road diet;
- Changing patterns from driving to school back to walking to school could take years;
- The people of the community want some action taken.

There was a consensus of both Boards that one of the options presented by Brian Dempsey should be implemented as a pilot program in September and they should work together to present joint recommendations. The School Board will forward suggestions to their architect and follow up with a work session and will then come back to the City Council with an option recommendation. Mayor Otis thanked Mr. Dempsey for his time, availability and expertise.

Board Member Edward Fox made a motion, seconded by Board Member Kendall Eagan, at 10:20 a.m., to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss the Osborn litigation. Board President Culyer made a motion, seconded by Mayor Otis to end the Executive Session at 11:27 a.m. No decisions were made.

There being no further business to discuss, Board President Culyer made a motion, seconded by Mayor Otis and unanimously carried, to adjourn the meeting at 11:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn F. Nodarse  
City Clerk