

DEPARTMENT OF CITY CLERK

CITY HALL

APRIL 1, 1993

The Committee on Finance meets this day at 5:00 o'clock P.M., in Committee Room "A", City Clerk's Department, City Hall.

PRESENT: Chairman Dillon, Councilman Igliazzi and Councilman Fenton.

ABSENT: Councilman Glavin and Councilwoman Fargnoli.

Also present are Stephen Woerner, City Internal Auditor, Robert DeRobbio, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Paul Vora, School Department, Joseph Renzulli, School Department, Bob Troiano, Providence Public Building Authority, Alan Sepe, Acting Director of Public Property, Councilman Mancini, Councilwoman DiRuzzo, Councilwoman Nolan, Councilwoman Young, Councilman Rollins, Councilwoman Williams, Michael R. Clement, City Clerk and Claire E. Brooke-Stewart, Assistant Clerk.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS AUTHORITY TO USE UNSPENT PROCEEDS OF THE VEAZIE STREET SCHOOL PROJECT TO DEVELOP SCHOOL ADDITIONS.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: On the docket tonight is the schools, the additions to the schools issue, once again. Mr. DeRobbio do you want to make a presentation?

MR. DEROBPIO: Yes. At the last meeting of the Finance Committee, where several other members of the City Council were present and I said that I would get a packet of information out to all the Council members and if they could look that over during the week between that meeting and this one and if you had any questions regarding the expansions of these facilities to either call me during the week I would be able to answer questions. This meeting is pretty much whatever questions you may have on the information that I sent out.

COUNCILMAN IGLIAZZI: I know we have had a lot of discussions about the problems with Laurel Hill School and Oliver Hazard Perry and I assume, personally, all the factors that you have already presented. I spoke with the principal at Oliver Hazard Perry, John Hernandez who indicates the fact that Perry does have a space problem and he was looking forward to the classrooms being built at Laurel Hill and to move the 5th grade from Perry to Laurel Hill to allow him the necessary space for 6-8. Now what I need to know, obviously he asked me, what he is concerned with is, how are

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you going to solve that problem for September of 1993 and what assurances do we have that the Laurel Hill School will infact be resolved or should I say, be added to with new classroom space in 1994. He asking me for those two assurances and I said, well, those two assurances I never got because the discussion we had was that you were going to remove students from Oliver Hazard Perry and send them to Carl Lauro and that was going to alleviate the cramming. The problem with that, I am assuming that is not just one grade it is a cross segment.

MR. DEROBPIO: What we had discussed was that we were looking at a cluster of schools. We were looking at Laurel Hill Avenue, Webster Avenue, Asa Messer, West Broadway, Carl Lauro and that is kind of going around in a circle around either Perry or Bridgham. We felt that the additional, we could make modifications that would accommodate Bridgeham, that would be the 5th grade and that could be absorbed between the three schools either West Broadway, the addition of some 5th grade at Asa Messer, Asa Messer Annex and Carl Lauro. I have to admit, the Laurel Avenue is a priority of ours just like it was, Mary Fogarty was the last time we put additional classroom space on. Some of the discussion at the last meeting was, why did we --- with the first additional classroom space up at Kennedy, George West area and the question that was posed today for me to respond to was, how were the sites selected for this type of construction. When we went out the first time, we had a list of five or six schools that we said we needed additional classroom space, could the architects take a look at those sites and see where it would fit in budget wise, where we could get the most classroom space for the dollar. It came back at the Kennedy area, at the George West and at the Webster Avenue.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: What was the budget for Laurel Hill?

MR. DEROBPIO: The budget for Laurel Hill, because of the heating problems that we were going to run into and because of the fact that we were going up more than a half a level to get into that school, we were talking in excess of \$500,000.00.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: 1/4th of the 2 million dollars.

MR. DEROBPIO: Yes for four classrooms and that was asking for a variance on the property line for the house directly next to

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that parking area. We had tried two different locations for it on either side of the two sides.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: The budget is about \$500,000.00 for that.

MR. DEROBPIO: Correct.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: What is the budget for King?

MR. DEROBPIO: The budget for King is 470 or 530, one of the two.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: So that is also going to happen. What is the budget for Fogarty?

MR. DEROBPIO: It must be 470.

MR. WOERNER: Reservoir is 855.

MR. DEROBPIO: Those are the projected costs.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Reservoir at 800, that is how many classrooms at Reservoir?

MR. DEROBPIO: They are building four classrooms plus a gymnasium, cafeteria, auditorium but out of that construction of four, we are realizing five classrooms plus an additional room for special ed which is a half size classroom so we are realizing six classrooms at that location.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: So you are getting classrooms and a gymnasium there?

MR. DEROBPIO: Yes, it is the same type of design we have at Webster Avenue.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: And that is why it virtually doubles the amount of the others?

MR. DEROBPIO: Yes.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: So if you are going to go just the classrooms there and not the gymnasium, would that not free up enough space, enough money to dissolve the Laurel Hill problem?

MR. DEROBPIO: No because the existing facilities couldn't hold the students for the gym. Where the gym and the cafeteria are currently being ----.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Construction is going to ---- just the cafeteria, gymnasium ----.

MR. DEROBPIO: The increase student population at that school would not be able to be accommodated in that existing facility.

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CHAIRMAN DILLON: What they use for a gym, cafeteria in that school is not bigger than a classroom.

MR. WOERNER: You are only getting six classrooms there, right?

COUNCILMAN FENTON: And the gym, cafeteria.

MR. WOERNER: And the gym.

MR. DEROBIO: We are constructing four plus the gym, cafeteria.

MR. WOERNER: The old cafeteria becomes two classrooms.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: And you get a library as it is now, they have a morning kindergarten. In the afternoon, the kindergarten classroom is the library so they are going to get a library out of it too, right?

MR. DEROBIO: Correct. I can't rule out the possibility that there are \$100,000.00, \$200,000.00 dollars left in this process once the bids come in for the total project and that is why I guess I would be against your recommendation to take Laurel Hill off of the Resolution because you already have it stated on the Resolution before City Council that that is one of the four sites if the funds are available it should be locked in directly for Laurel Hill because that was on the initial plans. I think there was a feeling to amend that resolution and specify the three sites as opposed to the four.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: Well, we were going over the wording and comparing it with the wording for the Veazie Street School and there was some language in the Veazie Street School saying, you know, after you guys get the bids you have to come back to the Finance Committee so that we get as look at the bids and see if we want to reallocate them and the other thing that is probably even more important is item number 5 which is, "That the City Council hereby approves the transfer of such real properties to be designed by the School Department to the Authority". That is kind of an important issue.

MR. DEROBIO: Would that mean going to the PBA?

CHAIRMAN DILLON: As I understand the way these arrangements work between the PBA and the city is that the Public Buildings Authority takes title to the piece of property and then leases it

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to the city. So I think you need something that says we are transferring the land on which these new modular classrooms are going to sit.

MR. DEROBIO: They are not modular.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: Well, the new classes, you are going to transfer it to the PBA?

MR. TROIANO: As it were, Mr. Chairman, there has to be a transfer of some other substitute property which is what happened with the Veazie Street School. There can be some other property transfer here if there is a problem with transferring that specific site.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: But the Resolution, as it is now, doesn't say that any property is being transferred. Is that okay?

MR. TROIANO: I would have to talk to bond counsel. If I can use a phone out there.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: We would also like to put back, there are a couple of other paragraphs that somehow got lost in the translation.

COUNCILMAN FENTON: Like 3, the authority shall submit a summary. That would be nice.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: While he is checking that out we will hear from a couple of the parents. We just want one or two from each school.

COUNCILMAN FENTON: If the bond counsel wants collateral, which I am sure they will, you have to put that back in.

MR. FOLEY: Thank you Mr. Chairman. My name is Thomas Foley. I am President of the Reservoir Avenue School PTO. I am here tonight in strong support of the school about the money being spent on the schools and to answer the question about the cafeteria/auditorium, right now, if they want to call an assembly of all the children, they have to sit on the floor and squeeze in. It is really small, not too nice to hold an assembly to tell kids whatever you want to tell them. If you want to hold one of the plays, go there. The PTO sponsors plays, they go there, or whatever. The School Department may have a thing on drugs. It is not really conducive to learning. They sit, they talk. You know how kids are, if they are close to one another, they are going to

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be touching and it is really not conducive to kids really learning in that atmosphere and it really is solely needed at that school, particular. Also the classrooms, the modulars which will add the other classrooms also, the library, hopefully will be put down where the gym is now and also my fondest dream is to end split classrooms, split grades.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: The grades being?

MR. FOLEY: Split grades being, 2 and 3, 4 and 5, 5 and 6 or whatever they may be.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: Meaning that one teacher teaches first and second graders in the same classroom.

MR. FOLEY: Right. I believe right now it is 1 and 2, 3 and 4, and 5 and 6. That is really not conducive. You go from one fifth grade to the fourth grade, whatever. It is really not the ideal settings. I realize it is a lot of money. Reservoir Avenue School needs it. We have needed it for a long time. I would hope that the Finance Committee would go as stated on the plans and if you have any questions I would be more than happy to answer them.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: Thank you. Anybody else?

MR. TALAN: My name is David Talan, 25 Santiago Street and I am past President of the Reservoir Triangle Neighborhood Association. Mr. Foley spoke very well on the reasons why we need additional space to Reservoir Avenue School children who are already there. I would like to present it from kind of a different angle from the standpoint of all the children who live in that immediate neighborhood, in the Reservoir Triangle, who would like to go to the Reservoir Avenue School and cannot. The biggest reason we need additional classrooms there is that the number of elementary school age children who live in the Reservoir Triangle and nearby is far in excess of the number of available classroom spaces in that particular area ----- 2 to 1 mark. What you end up having is a lot of children who live in the Reservoir Triangle Neighborhood are now unable to get into the school and it is walking distance from where they live and are being bussed to school all over the entire city and I can give some real horror stories, such as the Procaccini family that live right across the street from the Reservoir Avenue School. There three children are

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being bussed to two different elementary schools, one in South Providence, the other one is Robert F. Kennedy up in Elmhurst, a little five year old girl who is being bussed there and has already caught pneumonia once this winter standing out in the snow waiting for the school bus, you know, there are so many other horror stories. There is Reverend ---- who is an ---- minister in the neighborhood who moved in two years ago and is only able to get one of his four elementary school age children in Reservoir Avenue and the other three just can't get there. They are being bussed all over the city and I could take up this whole meeting giving you horror stories from the Reservoir Triangle Neighborhood but you have the idea. Basically, this is symptomatic of the entire south side of the city, not just the Reservoir Triangle, you know, Mary Fogarty is on your agenda also and they have the same type of problem. There has not been a new school built on the south side of the city since 1960 when they built the Flynn School and the Mary Fogarty School and since that time, a number of schools on the south side have burned down or been shut down. The Lexington Avenue School is closed down, eventually burned down. The Willow Street School was closed and sold to a condominium developer. The Vineyard Street School was shut down and is still sitting there empty. The Althea Street School was shut down and the eventually had it reopened as an Annex ---- because there was such an overflow and it is still not accommodating all the children that live in that area. ----- the entire south side of the city, only half of the children that live on the south side are able to go to school in that neighborhood and the rest are being bussed elsewhere, so we really have a need for it. Now, how does this effect you on the Finance Committee? Obviously every child is being bussed to the neighborhood outside of his own school instead of being able to walk to his neighborhood school, it is costing money to pay for busses. Every classroom space that you open up on the south side by making an addition to Reservoir Avenue and to Mary Fogarty, take Reservoir Avenue, it is 100, 150 extra children, all of whom are going to come from that neighborhood. All of whom are now riding school busses to other parts of the city and whatever it costs right not

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to bus a child somewhere else, what ever that cost it, multiply it by 100-150 and that is how much money you are going to be saving because all of these children are going to use these extra spaces are going to live walking distance to them. I know you talked about spending money but I want to let you know how you can be saving money by spending a little bit. I would just like to comment on a few of the things that I read in the newspaper. I am sorry Councilman Glavin couldn't be here tonight. I know he made comments in the newspaper at the last meeting about how we ought to be looking into doing some other things to save money before you spend this money like increasing the class size by three in every classroom. I guess he had some other ideas. Well, you know, pass the word on to Councilman Glavin that I applaud him for any ideas that he has to saving money and squeezing more out of the School Budget. He should keep up the good work, however, all his ideas won't even make a dent in the problem in this part of the city because again, the number of children who want to get in that live in that area, there is no space. It is far in excess of anything Councilman Glavin's ideas could open up. I know at the last meeting you were frustrated by lack of information, well, I am frustrated to but don't take that out on us in the neighborhood who really need something. I know from the standpoint of the Neighborhood Association, from the PTO, we would be very impressed by being involved in some of these plans ---- addition to Reservoir Avenue. Up until know, we haven't really been given a chance to become a part of it and I would love the chance before us too late, in particular, if there is any way for the same amount of money we could take that gymnasium and make it more useful for after hours without adding to the cost. I would love the chance to do that.

MS. SHEPARD: My name is Linda Shepard of 388 Adelaide Avenue. I am one of the parents of Reservoir Avenue School I have two children who are attending Reservoir Avenue and they have attended Reservoir Avenue since they have started going to school and they are both ages 8 and 9 years old. I want to speak in particular in regards to the split classes at Reservoir Avenue School. My son, who is now in the second grade, he has been in a



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split class since the first grade and he is in second grade and he is also now in a split class. From the standpoint of the children, I really think that we are doing a disadvantage to the children not being able to get the proper attention from the teacher in the proper time to be taught the lessons because teachers have to actually teach two separate lessons. One for one grade and one for another so it is splitting up the time and therefore to teach the children are not really being taught all that they could really be taught because the teacher has to split up there time and I realize that the classrooms are too large and therefore some children have to be forced to be put into other classrooms but because of the new plan, I hope that this will benefit the children in the way that there will be more classroom space and therefore would eliminate children having to be put in split classes and that is my concern. I have also had many of the teachers express to me what a disadvantage it is not only for the children but also for them as well to teach the class having two separate curriculums to teach to the children so among many other advantages that these classrooms would give to the schools, I am coming from the standpoint of split classrooms. I am very concerned about that. Like I said, my son, he is doing very well in school but I think that given the opportunity to be in a straight class how much more he would be learning and how much better he would be doing in school. This is a concern of many of the other parents at Reservoir Avenue. I don't know how many other schools this is going on but I have heard that there is other schools like this. So on behalf of the other schools as well as Reservoir Avenue, I am really very concerned about the split classrooms, how the children, what they could be getting if they were in a straight class.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: I have to agree. I would think that as a teacher, I find it more offensive to try to teach two grades than two more kids, to be honest. I could imagine, you are going to have a kid that is very young, you are going to have somebody that is born in December and then if you get on the other end of the scale, you are going to get a kid that maybe has repeated a year or was in pre-one or something like that and you are going to have

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kids four or five years apart.

MS. SHEPARD: It is terrible.

MS. KENNER: My name is Maureen Kenner, 39 Fosdyke Street. I was here last week. I have a unique opportunity this year because I am a Providence Public School teacher and I also have a son in the first grade at King and he also is in a split 1 - 2 grade. A little boy who goes into the first grade not knowing how to read is somehow is expected to keep up to the second grade material and is not given the proper instruction because they are busy with the second graders. I am extremely opposed to that and as a teacher, I see that it doesn't work because I work in the school every day. My other concern is, getting back to what you were saying, I really emphasize with your situation. What we find in our building is so many of the children are bussed to a our neighborhood school, maybe they come up form Fox Point. They are unable to participate in the programs that we have going on in the school, may it be dances, fairs, father/daughter and mother/son PTO because either they don't have transportation or the parents don't know even where the school is and the what happens is the parents and the kids don't get a sense of community because it is too far from their neighborhood. Like somebody said last week, I think we have to look at each school and who maybe needs it more than the other but I am firmly on record for King because I think leaving elementary school at the fourth grade is absurd. You are going to ask a nine or ten year old to go to middle school?

CHAIRMAN DILLON: Any other comments?

MR. MACMANUS: My name is Bob MacManus, 61 Memorial Road. Will this impact split classrooms?

MR. DEROBIO: I think when you look at the expanded facilities, having five additional classroom spaces available is certainly going to allow them to do more things to keep the classrooms by grade levels as opposed to split classrooms. Split classrooms allow the School Department to make the best use of personnel, to give us a little bit of a safety valve for the communities, the neighborhood students that will come in during the year. My first emphasis is to try to keep all of the neighborhood students going to that neighborhood school. Now, the

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problem comes when you have a class size of 26 and that 28 or 29th student comes into the neighborhood for grade two and you have to turn around to that parent and say, we don't have any space left in the building, you have to travel to go to a regular grade two or grade one classroom. That is where we use that split class.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: So you say to the parent, your child can either go to a different school or be in a split classroom? Is that the way it goes?

MR. DEROBPIO: We try to keep the neighborhood students in the neighborhood school and usually that split class would be able to accommodate that, yes. However, we are going to put and I talked to Mr. Foley today, the major emphasis is to accommodate the neighborhood students in that full classroom situation. We know the problem that exists at Reservoir and I am going to make every effort to eliminate that problem for the next year. Judging from the numbers that are present, the number of students that are bussed into that particular school and the number of students that are bussed out, it appears as though that problem will not exist.

MS. -----: Which particular problem?

MR. DEROBPIO: Of a split class. We will be able to go with straight classrooms.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: Anybody else who hasn't spoken yet?

MS. DEFORGES: Carol Deforges, 93 Lauriston Street in Providence. My child goes to King, he was in a split class last year, second grade. Also, to send a fourth grader over is just an impossible situation. The eighth graders gang up on the kids. Many kids get turned off to school. They get so scared. They are not emotionally fit at that age to go over. Sixth grade is a different story. Fifth grade is a whole different ball game because some of them are 10 some 9 ---- 11. It is a horrendous situation. You also have an added element in that, you know, a lot of private schools and the East Side tends to get it completed and one whole year of kids being in the public school, they automatically deplete when they know their child has to go to fifth grade at Nathan Bishop School. Starting public school and if you gave them one more year and maturity, I don't think you would have the --- proper school you have right now.

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COUNCILWOMAN DIRUZZO: I agree with you and a number of kids ----- the elementary schools --- the middle schools so we are against our better judgement. We are forced into that situation. I agree that they should come back because everything you said about that age group is true. I am concerned with the 150 seats that are ---- and I know we need it. I am not against the need but are you going to guarantee that ----- 150 seats go to children in that neighborhood and also what Mr. Talan has described tonight with regard to the neighborhood children living across the street and not being able to go to their school. Reservoir Avenue ---- in my neighborhood as well as all the neighborhoods in the City of Providence. We have children who live across the street from their schools who have to be bussed out of for reasons that there is no room because we have all the children coming in from other neighborhoods filling their seats and I am against that and I agree with you 110%. The neighborhood children should go to neighborhood schools and that is why people buy houses in neighborhoods, so that there children can attend neighborhood schools. This is true of every neighborhood in the City of Providence, South Side, East Side, Silver Lake, the Olneyville schools, everywhere. People want their children walking to their schools but we don't have that privilege here in Providence and what I want to know and what I have been questioning is --- this move is made and I know the need is there to make room for the students, will those 150 seats truly be filled by the neighborhood children in the Reservoir Avenue district or will be accommodating other children in those seats. What is going to happen with the rest of the plan. I have a problem dealing with the rest of the plan. Easing the burden, all of the neighborhood schools and my concern is naturally the ones in my ward, Webster Avenue School, the D'Abate School where we have kids who live right there and are bussed to West Broadway and Fox Point and you know, I don't want to be --- with the point. I want some answers, specific answers.

MR. DEROBIO: The current enrollment at Reservoir Avenue is 203 students. ---- 271 students in Silver Lake. As you said, there are a number being bussed out and some being bussed in do to programs. If we increase the capacity of that building by 132

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seats, we will have 340 seats which has to accommodate the 271 students that are in that neighborhood. If by chance a student is already in another school and does not want to return back ---- four or five or six in another elementary school and would like to stay there we are not going to force the issue of them returning back to Reservoir. Our major emphasis for 93-94 would be to look at grades 1, 2 and 3 and work with those groups in trying to pull them back into the neighborhood schools. I think once a student has established themselves in grades 4, 5 and 6, the offer should go out to the parents and say we have a seat in your neighborhood schools but not to force the student back in. If the parent would like to return them then that is fine. The question with regard to Laurel Hill and Webster, as I said, we are making the shift in population between Laurel Hill, Webster Avenue, Asa Messer, Asa Messer Annex, West Broadway and Carl Lauro. You will just have to take my word for it that that population is going to shift around creating the seats at Webster Avenue which will allow us to offer grades 1, 2 and 3 back into that school --- have to move out and the same thing for Laurel.

COUNCILWOMAN DIRUZZO: Two years ago there was one ---- left at Webster.

MR. DEROBIO: It can't take place just in one building. You have to look at this in relationship of three or four buildings.

COUNCILWOMAN DIRUZZO: Exactly what I am saying.

MR. DEROBIO: That is why I can't say that there is going to be 26 seats available. I know that what I am going to do is put the emphasis on grades 1, 2 and 3 and try to clear up that situation so that that provides some basis for 94-95 and 95-96 for establishing that school in neighborhood schools. The other part of me says, do you bring back a fourth grader who has established himself in another school when they may not want to come back. The offer will be there if the seat is available.

COUNCILWOMAN DIRUZZO: The last time when we did this, Webster Avenue was one of the schools where we were gratefully receive the additions in the cafeteria and gymnasium.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: Supported by the majority of the people.

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COUNCILWOMAN DIRUZZO: It was very welcome and I know all of you are looking forward to it but the additional classrooms did not house our neighborhood students. They housed students from other neighborhoods and we are still being refused admission to our own neighborhood school as well. We have one extra classroom in the basement and you people decided to put an ESL classroom from all over the City of Providence so that is not addressing the needs of the neighborhood. That is all I am saying. Tell me that there will be equal treatment for all the children in the city.

MR. DEROBPIO: If you go back to the present situation when that happened two years ago, that would answer your question. Not everybody bring up that word, back to this Council, but there was a need at that point. I think that the influx of students into the system since that time has decreased the need ----- specifically in the shift of population for that ----.

COUNCILWOMAN DIRUZZO: I hope so but I don't think so.

MR. DEROBPIO: The numbers speak for themselves. We have gone from where we were at that point in the 63, 64 stage up to 69 and 70%. A lot of things were cut out of the school budget because of that point. The influx in population has taken that reason almost out of the why you are doing things ----.

COUNCILWOMAN YOUNG: I just wanted to ask Mr. DeRobbio one question. I can understand what you are saying. What you are saying is that every parent will get a letter in the mail, is that what you are saying? To notify them that the possibility of their child going back to a neighborhood schools exists or the seat becomes available?

MR. DEROBPIO: Those parents whose children are being bussed out and they are getting the priority with grades 1, 2 and 3.

COUNCILWOMAN YOUNG: And they will all be getting notified by mail?

MR. DEROBPIO: They will get notified by mail or if we can come up with that schematic prior to the end of school that Mr. Renzulli and I will definitely have parent forums at each of the schools, you know, send a letter home and invite those parents in because I think a lot of explaining has to be done to that body, where we are going in this direction. The one thing we want to

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do, with all emphasis with the School Department is to have this --- approach and get the parents involved in an early stage. The quicker we can put the additional classroom space behind us, we will be able to plan for 16 or 17 rooms where we can begin to address the concerns in each of the schools and move in the -----.

COUNCILWOMAN YOUNG: I apologize for running late, I came from a Housing Authority meeting but I relayed to Stephen Woerner, --- questions, I don't know if you responded to them?

MR. DEROBPIO: Not yet.

COUNCILWOMAN YOUNG: Because I really need to know.

MR. DEROBPIO: One of the questions was on bussing, will it ease some of the bussing population.

COUNCILWOMAN YOUNG: From the neighborhood that has been bearing the burden of the majority of the bussing and that is clearly South Side.

MR. DEROBPIO: Again, if you look at that cluster of elementary schools, Broad, Fogarty, Sackett and Reservoir, you are putting additional classroom space at two of those buildings and the first priority is to bring the neighborhood students back in that are being bussed out of those districts. You know, up to two sites you are increasing Reservoir capacity by about 140 students and increasing Fogarty by approximately 114 students. So you are looking at an increase close to 250 seats in that area. Will it bring back all of the students? I can't say that because the numbers are too great in that area.

COUNCILWOMAN YOUNG: So what is the process to eventually get the ones that are disproportionately bussed right now, back into their neighborhoods? I think you can ---- I think that is why we are in this dilemma right now because that was not --- school systems. There were some schools who are getting much fairer treatment and other students getting not equal treatment and that is why we had the bussing and my community complied with federal mandates even though they weren't too thrilled about it and I think all was realized now, I do anyway, it doesn't work. That is my opinion. I am just wondering, the majority of my neighborhood has been bussed out, how do we get --- there if all of these are going to be equal. You have so many kids on the South Side being

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bussed out. I think you are going to have to try to adjust it where parallel with Flynn School. I don't see them mentioned anywhere in the document.

MR. DEROBPIO: That is part of our plans.

COUNCILWOMAN YOUNG: Will they be getting additions?

MR. DEROBPIO: Not additions because there are some seats available there. We just might have to change the concept of the school and that is a decision that will have to be made at the School Board ----.

COUNCILWOMAN YOUNG: But those things are being discussed?

MR. DEROBPIO: Yes they are. Total picture, again, it is difficult for me to go into the other plans because the key to it is having the available space from the additional classroom space and if that is not available I can't -----.

COUNCILWOMAN YOUNG: When all this is said and done, this all completed, my community still is going to be the one that has the line share of the ---- being bussed out of their neighborhood and that is my concern, when this is all completed, that we still have to be bussed out, which we should not be bussed out.

COUNCILWOMAN NOLAN: You have some schools here that are under populated, really, and the kids are all being bussed in there. Has there been any thought to closing those schools and adding schools on the South Side where they need it?

MR. DEROBPIO: No.

COUNCILWOMAN NOLAN: Why? Because nobody wants to close their school.

MR. DEROBPIO: It just seems to be opposite the direction that we are going as far as trying to get ----.

COUNCILWOMAN NOLAN: But you have a neighborhood like Fox Point, for instance, if you look at Fox Point and it has got a neighborhood population of 183 and they have a school with a capacity for 467, that means that all the kids that go to that school, practically, are going to be bussed in. That is the way your numbers read.

MR. DEROBPIO: That is about half of that population. Although the Fox Point should be of greater concern to you because that is just on school in the city that is accessible for



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handicapped students, physically handicapped students and a lot of the work that you are doing.....

COUNCILWOMAN NOLAN: I am not saying to close Fox Point. I am just saying there is still doesn't, even with this list and with your plans for the classrooms, there just doesn't seem to be equity. When I see from the Sackett Street School ---- when I seen 400 kids being bussed out. When I see from Stuart, 800 kids being bussed out of that neighborhood, there is something wrong.

MR. DEROBPIO: If all of the students in the neighborhood went to Gilbert Stuart, we have a population close to 1600. We are also looking at an additional school that has recently is closing at the end of this year to see of that could provide a safety valve too.

COUNCILWOMAN NOLAN: Where is that?

MR. DEROBPIO: The St. Pauls.

COUNCILWOMAN NOLAN: That is in Cranston.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: St. Pauls Christian Day School. You know where it is Pat.

COUNCILWOMAN NOLAN: On Elmwood Avenue?

CHAIRMAN DILLON: No, Potter and Bucklin.

MR. DEROBPIO: Again, I wanted to say that the emphasis is going to be with the grades 1, 2, 3 population draw that into the neighborhood schools so that it will build, that will be our case of 94/95.

MS. KENNER: I applaud you for bringing up the issue for special needs kids. First of all, I do work at Fox Point and it is ----- free so we allow children to be intergrated -----.

COUNCILWOMAN NOLAN: All the schools should be handicap accessible.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: They are.

COUNCILMAN FENTON: No they are not.

MR. DEROBPIO: At Mary Fogarty up to three classrooms are going to be available. At Reservoir Avenue, one classroom will be available and at King, two classrooms will be available.

COUNCILMAN FENTON: King is not.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: I could have sworn that we did something with the ramp at King a long time ago.

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MS. KENNER: The thing about Fox Point, there are no stairs in the building. The whole building is ramped. So there are no stairs and no split levels for the kids to get around.

CHAIRMAN DILLON: Is there a ramp outside of King School?

MR. DEROBPIO: Yes. There is a way to get into King, just one level where the main office is but it is a curb cut.

COUNCILWOMAN NOLAN: I would like to look on this as a start. I think for years and years and years, to go along with Federal Deseg Relations, we have been bussing kids from the South Side over to the other side of town. We have made mistake after mistake after mistake and I think what we have to do now, this is the first step and from now on, you have to look at redrawing the lines, you have to look at an equitable number of students in each school from those neighborhoods because on the South Side, we believe in neighborhood schools just like they do in Mount Pleasant.

MR. DEROBPIO: As I said to Councilwoman DiRuzzo, that as far as re-addressing the lines, I would first like to make an attempt to return students to the neighborhood and then see where that balance is off where we can accommodate and then look at that restructuring of the lines but I don't think that that can be done all in one year. We would like to attempt to do it with the neighborhoods schools.

COUNCILWOMAN DIRUZZO: We have the least amount of schools there. We have Webster Avenue School, Laurel Hill Avenue School up and down the street from each other. Why can't we just utilize the schools in every neighborhood rather than sending them clear across the city.

MR. DEROBPIO: But I also think that that comes with establishing a more open dialogue between the School Department and the City Council. I really think that our emphasis on establishing that dialogue and as long as you know what we are thinking before we actually have to put it on paper then we can get your concerns and we can work together on this issue.

COUNCILWOMAN NOLAN: This is the first time I have seen a list like this and if I had seen it before we did the portable classrooms last time, it would never have happened.

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COUNCILMAN FENTON: I would like to make a motion to adopt the resolution but inserting the following three provisions from the resolution adopted by the Council number 182, approved March 28, 1991 and those would be provisions 2, 3 and 5 and they would be added after number 4 on page 2. Those three provisions are insuring Council approval over the bids and also insuring that the PBA has the real property necessary to support the bonding authority and this is the same language that appeared in the Veazie Street language and I think it is necessary both to insure Council is protected as well as insuring that these are a bondable entity.

On motion of Councilman Fenton, seconded by Councilman Igliazzi, it is voted to amend the foregoing Resolution by adding the following sections after number 4 on page 2:

5. That the Authority shall submit all estimates regarding such renovation, construction, improvement, installation necessary to construction, improving, furnishing, installing and equipping modular classrooms to the Committee on Finance of the City Council as such estimates become available.
6. That the Authority shall submit a summary of all bids to the Committee on Finance when such bids have been received and prior to such bids being awarded.
7. That the City Council hereby approves the transfer of such real property to be designed by the School Department to the Authority.

On motion of Councilman Fenton, seconded by Councilman Igliazzi, it is voted to approve the foregoing Resolution, as amended.

ADJOURNMENT: On motion of Councilman Fenton, seconded by Councilman Igliazzi, it is voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 o'clock P.M.

*Michael R. Clement*  
CLERK

*Claire E. Brooke-Stewart*  
Assistant Clerk