

Marblehead Planning Board May 12, 2020 LWVM Observer: Judith Black
Board Members in Attendance: Barton Hyte, Robert Schaeffner, Rossanna Ferrante,
Andrew Christensen, Edward Nilsson, Steve Leverone, Town Planner: Rebecca Curran-
Cutting

The meeting focused on a single issue. The building committee for the new Bell School wanted to present a new color scheme/brick color for the exterior of the building.

Gene Raymond, representing the company holding the contract brought the Planning Board up to date on their progress:

- On site construction has continued
- The schools are demolished
- Surveys of neighboring homes, with the help of Jason Gilliland and Fire Dept. have been completed.*
- Blasting is proceeding 2-3 days a week

The school planning board then presented their desire to make the school red brick, rather than the wheat color, that has been seen in all the mock-ups of the school. It is imperative that this be decided soon since the brick order must be put in and this aspect of the construction be completed before cold weather kisses New England.

In cold weather the mortar and water used must be kept warm from external sources, and the expense goes up. They plan to start the brick work in Oct.

A rigorous debate ensued about whether the wheat color had been the official choice or the committee or was using it merely a place holder until they decided upon a color. The Planning Board was generally of the opinion that the wheat color had been part of the approval process and was what everyone at town meeting, which voted to supply the finances for the school, was shown. The school planning board emphasized that it had not been officially determined, that this fact is part of the public record, and it was within their purview to change and finalize it.

The school planning committee said that they did a deep dive into the community and discovered that many of the homes had red brick facades, and that a red brick school would harmonize with the neighborhood. Their research also showed that red brick wears better than wheat, and does not show dirt as quickly.

It was noted by the Planning Board that a large red brick building looks very institutional, and given that the school is nestled in a residential community, they were in favor of a gentler color that would blend into the setting.

A number of people from the community spoke. One woman asked if anyone in the neighborhood had been surveyed or informed about the color change and was responded to by the school planning committee that "All our meetings are posted." Other community members spoke in favor the wheat color.

Ultimately the question came down a distinction of the nature of the request: Is this an administrative or materials issue? If it is administrative, the school planning board can use

the color of brick they determine best suit their needs. If it is a materials issue then they must put in a formal submission to the Planning Board and have a public hearing. The Planning Board determined that it was latter and a hearing has been set for June 9, 2020

Eastern Yacht Club ask for a continuance on their request and were granted such.

*These were necessary so that anyone who had cracking or other damage from the blasting and other activities, could ascertain the root and find compensation from the appropriate source.