

# Facilities Master Plan Recommendations Phase 2

Report of the Findings & Recommendations  
of the  
Hyde Park Central School District Facilities Steering Forum

Presented to the:  
Hyde Park Central School District Board of Education,  
Administration & the Public

Presented by  
FSF Committee Members:

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September 14, 2006

## I. INTRODUCTION

“State-of-the-art” when built in 1939, today the Hyde Park Central School District facilities are worn and suffering from a lack of attention to repair and upkeep; a lack of significant improvements or modernization, and overcrowding. Today, over a half-century later, its facilities are obsolete. Each day administrators, staff, and students must deal with the difficulties and inconvenience of unreliable systems. Each day students learn in crowded spaces in school buildings that are inadequate to provide a quality, 21<sup>st</sup> century education for Hyde Park students.

The Hyde Park Central School District’s Facilities Steering Forum has worked diligently since spring 2003 to review the key issues and needs surrounding the district’s school buildings and other district facilities. The committee structure allowed for the participation of all interested individuals, and the input and expertise of numerous constituent groups. There were numerous individuals who participated in the planning and design process of this master facilities project as either a member of the Facilities Steering Forum or as a member of one or more of the sub-committees. Additionally, The Thomas Group, an architectural firm, and JMOA Engineering, P. C., a construction management firm, were retained to work with district staff and committee members to identify and analyze issues and needs; to develop possible options and provide cost models.

Due to the interest and participation of the community, and the expertise of professional consulting firms, the committee was able to develop an educationally sound plan that addresses current and future needs based on realistic data and allows flexibility for future needs.

Tonight, Christine Jones, Duane Pearson and John Vanderlee will represent all members of the Facilities Steering Forum as they present the committee’s findings and recommendations for Phase 2 of the Hyde Park Central School District’s Facilities Master Plan.

## 2. HISTORY & OVERVIEW

The Facilities Steering Forum (FSF) is a broad-based committee that was established in the Spring of 2003. The committee has been working for the past three years reviewing the key issues and needs surrounding repair and renovation of the district's facilities, and possible expansion to alleviate overcrowding in our schools. The Facilities Steering Forum met regularly to review all aspects of the problem and identify possible solutions. For the past year, the committee's work focused on developing a thorough, thoughtful, and visionary plan for the use of the district's facilities into the foreseeable future.

The overall Master Plan Recommendation presented to the board of education and the public in December 2004 called for a three-phase approach. The implementation of the first phase of the plan began with voter approval of a referendum in March 2005. Phase 1 recognized and addressed only the most immediate needs focusing on health and safety and accessibility issues so the district could provide safe and healthy learning environments for all Hyde Park students. Phase 1A work was completed in the summer of 2005; Phase 1B work is scheduled to be completed by December 2006.

The Recommendation also called for a grade level configuration creating K – 4 “neighborhood” elementary schools at Hyde Park, Netherwood, North Park, Ralph Smith and Violet Ave; a 5 – 6 intermediate school at Haviland; and creating a separate and distinct 7 – 8 middle school on the FDR campus while maintaining a separate and distinct 9 – 12 high school at FDR.

Phase 2 is the “big” piece of the Master Plan Recommendation. It addresses infrastructure and educational program needs. It establishes a comprehensive, long-range plan based on input from all constituent groups within the community to accommodate the district's academic and enrollment needs; address remaining immediate needs in all buildings, and meets the vision of the Hyde Park School District.

Using the grade level structure previously described; the committee was charged with developing a plan concept that would prepare the district's facilities for the implementation of this model and provide for the academic needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century students. Committee members were asked to identify:

- Space requirements based on enrollment growth and new housing, operating capacities, and programmatic needs for all grade levels;
- A level of separate identity for a middle school and high school that would share a campus;
- Shared and separate middle school and high school spaces; and
- To identify and prioritize infrastructure needs at all buildings.

Committed to developing an educationally and fiscally sound plan, the committee first needed to determine “**where we are**” by identifying educational program, space, and infrastructure needs at

## 2. HISTORY & OVERVIEW

each of the district's buildings; "**where we need to be**" to ensure that Hyde Park students receive the best education possible; and finally, "**what needs to be done**" to bring the district's facilities into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This was an arduous and difficult task; and committee members had to make hard decisions. The magnitude of what needs to be accomplished to get us from "here" to "there" is significant because so little has been done to upgrade our facilities over the years. However, the committee firmly believes that their work and the recommendations developed reflect the community's commitment to equity and excellence in education for all Hyde Park students.

### 3. IDENTIFICATION OF NEED

In order for committee members to make informed decisions and develop an effective plan for Phase 2 that would address the district's needs; the committee needed to understand the components that presently impact our facilities and those that will impact our facilities in the future.

In the context of key considerations the Facilities Steering Forum reviewed existing instructional programs; analyzed building usage, overcrowded conditions and projected future enrollments; infrastructure, and the fiscal realities. Architectural, construction, financial, legal and other professionals were enlisted to provide information and share their experience and expertise with committee members. A review of the following components was conducted by the committee, and in some instances, by sub-committees:

- The physical conditions of our facilities;
- Space: the adequacy and appropriateness of current instructional spaces;
- Building usage and capacities;
- Educational program, initiatives and mandates;
- Current and projected enrollment;
- Enrollment, particularly new housing development; and
- Financial considerations, including cost, aid-ability; debt; impact on taxpayers.

The committee's in-depth review of these components provided valuable insight as to "where we are today." The research shows:

- *Our buildings are old!* Our "newest" school is 40 years old; our oldest more than 65.
- *Our buildings require major renovations and alterations.* A comprehensive building condition survey to physically inspect our buildings; identifying and assessing the condition of every major system component based upon overall integrity, overall safety, probable useful life, and the need for maintenance, repair and replacement indicates:
  - The effects of time, normal wear and tear; the lack of major renovations and improvements; no long-range maintenance program; consistently decreasing budget dollars to operate and maintain our facilities, deferred maintenance, and decades of neglect has left us with buildings that are in need of major repairs.
  - Many of our mechanical, electrical, plumbing and heating systems are at, or have exceeded their expected useful, serviceable life; are obsolete; function unreliably and are difficult to repair as replacement parts are no longer available. Other building components, such as windows, roofs, and interior lighting are outdated and inefficient and need to be replaced.

### 3. IDENTIFICATION OF NEED

- *Our buildings are overcrowded.* Hyde Park educates approximately 4,600 K – 12 students in 7 schools: five (5) elementary schools containing grades K – 5, one (1) middle school serving all students in grades 6 – 8, and one (1) high school educating students in grades 9 – 12.
  - Four of our school buildings operated at over 100% capacity this past year: FDR at 133% of capacity; Violet Ave. at 114%; North Park at 108%; and Netherwood at 107%; with Hyde Park, Haviland, and Ralph Smith operating at 98%, 96% and 93% of capacity - significantly over the NY State Education Department's recommended capacity of 90%.
  - Demographic projections prepared by Western Suffolk BOCES in 2002/03 show a possible increase of an additional 600 students, bringing total K – 12 enrollments to over 5,000 students by 2012 – further impacting district buildings that are already overcrowded.
  - Kindergarten enrollment of more than 300 students is projected to remain at this heightened level through 2012. This is significant because, relative to the trend to maintain or gain students in transition; it is likely these larger kindergarten classes will increase in enrollment as it moves through the grade levels.
  - New housing – the greatest contributing factor that drives increases in enrollment – is based on data currently available. A Dutchess County Department of Planning & Development report dated August 2005 indicates there are 3,600 units in various stages of planning and construction within the boundaries of the Hyde Park School District. *Note: Major projects are defined as projects of 25 or more units in the towns of Hyde Park and Poughkeepsie; 10 or more in the towns of Pleasant Valley, Clinton, and Rhinebeck.*
    - In June 2006, research obtained by the Finance Committee, a sub-committee of the Facilities Steering Forum indicates the number of planned new housing starts rose to over 4,600 units: 3,639 planned for Hyde Park, 921 for Poughkeepsie, 93 for Pleasant Valley; 20 for Clinton. If only half are approved, it is possible that the student population could increase by an additional 1,420 students.
- *Our school buildings do not provide suitable and adequate space to support the district's instructional program needs, vision, educational mandates, and new learning standards.*

### 3. IDENTIFICATION OF NEED

- Students are receiving instruction and services in inappropriate “make-shift” spaces that are not conducive to learning: in hallways, lobbies, stairways and cafeterias; on stages; and in closets that have been converted into classrooms.
  - Science labs at the Middle School and FDR High School are antiquated and inadequate for providing Regents-level instruction.
  - “Art-on-a-cart,” music classes in cafeterias and on stages and deficient spaces for technology has been the norm.
  - Core spaces – our libraries, cafeterias, gymnasiums, and auditoriums – are undersized and inadequate to accommodate increasing enrollments. In some school buildings, core do not accommodate our current enrollment.
  - Many of our libraries cannot support media centers.
  - The adequacy of our cafeterias to accommodate our current enrollment at some buildings is due to scheduling not space. Projected increased enrollments will require splitting grade levels and additional scheduling of as many as four or five lunch periods at Haviland and FDR; Netherwood, Ralph R. Smith, and Violet Avenue.
  - Our athletic fields and facilities, used by both the school and the community, are in poor condition; exhibit extensive damage and deterioration, and in some instances, pose a potential safety hazard.
  - Equity for all students at all schools is not possible under our current conditions. Our current overcrowding has resulted in disparity in class size and inequity of space allocation among buildings and grade levels.
- *Our Transportation Facility is inadequate. The current facility and site layout was designed for older vehicles and maintenance needs. Upgrades are needed to appropriately house the transportation staff, accommodate newer vehicles, and to perform the required maintenance on the district's fleet.*
  - *The district currently leases the building in which our administrative offices are located. Our current lease agreement, of which we are in year 3 of a 5 year lease, is at a cost of \$1.2 million, or \$240,000 per year.*

The district and the community can no longer postpone the inevitable – we need to make a commitment to the future of Hyde Park’s schools now. Our buildings no longer represent “state-of-the-art” facilities and are no longer adequate to meet the demands of today’s higher academic standards.

#### 4. PROPOSED MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASE 2

As a whole community of which the Hyde Park Central School District schools are essential and central, we are obligated to find the vision and will to carry forward the Roosevelt legacy. Working within the framework of the proposed grade level configuration and focusing on the specific academic needs, physical space and infrastructure needs of each school building; the committee looked at redesigning all buildings to support our instructional programs and to be more functional.

The Phase 2 recommendations overlap the work begun in Phase 1. The recommendations of the Facilities Steering Forum for Phase 2 of the district's Facilities Master Plan are as follows.

##### *Recommendation #1:*

*That the Board of Education of the Hyde Park Central School District implement Phase 2 of the Master Plan, which calls for the following:*

*At all neighborhood elementary schools:*

- Renovations (flooring, ceilings, lighting, painting); alterations (complete gut) and reconfiguration of existing interior spaces; infrastructure improvements including exterior refurbishment, mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems upgrades, technology, and site work to accommodate the program and enrollment needs of students in grades K – 4.
  - This would include making existing classrooms, offices and core spaces more functional; creating classrooms for science, computer, art, band; providing multiple-use classrooms; resource and conference rooms; and expanding the libraries and cafeterias in some buildings.
- Construction of a new classroom addition at Netherwood to provide adequate spaces for the program and enrollment needs of the K – 4 students who will attend this neighborhood school. An addition at this school building will also eliminate the need for redistricting, alleviate the current overcrowding, and leave room for growth.

##### *Hyde Park Elementary School*

Alterations of interior space within the existing footprint of the facility to create classroom space for a computer lab, an art room; band, a multi-use classroom, and a classroom for large group instruction.

##### *Netherwood Elementary School*

Reconfiguration of existing space and alterations to create two (2) kindergarten classrooms, multiple-use classrooms, a computer lab, a resource room and conference room, and return the use of the stage; expanding the library and construction of a new classroom addition.

#### 4. PROPOSED MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASE 2

##### *North Park Elementary School*

Alterations and reconfiguration of existing space to provide multiple-use classrooms, and a band room with a stage.

##### *Ralph R. Smith Elementary School*

Alterations and reconfiguration of existing spaces to create multiple-use classrooms; expansion of the cafeteria and the library.

##### *Violet Avenue Elementary School*

Alterations to create creating multiple-use classrooms on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors; provide science and technology classrooms; convert an art room on the lower level to a band room; upgrade the library/media center; return the use of the stage.

##### *Haviland School*

Renovations, alterations, and reconfiguration of existing spaces to create an intermediate school with appropriate educational and programmatic spaces for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students; infrastructure and site improvements, including playfields.

Alterations on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor to provide a library/media center, computer labs, art rooms, choral and band rooms; a large group instruction room; space for a community/adult learning center, a conference room, and renovated locker rooms; alterations on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor to provide a meeting room.

##### *FDR High School*

The committee recommends the addition of approximately 100,000 square feet of newly constructed space on the north and south sides of the existing high school; and renovations, alterations, and reconfiguration of the 200,000 square feet of existing space at FDR to create two separate and distinct schools on one campus with separate and shared spaces: a two-story 7 – 8 middle school located on the north side of the building; 9 – 12 high school lpositioned on the south side of the building.

The recommendations for a middle school/high school at FDR include:

- 7 – 8 middle school main entrance located on north side of building; 9 – 12 high school main entrance located at the east side of the building,
- State-of-the-art technology and science labs; fine arts and performing arts spaces, with direct access for both middle school and high school students;
- New, upgraded athletic fields and athletic facilities; additional parking; site improvements, and infrastructure improvements.

#### 4. PROPOSED MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASE 2

- Middle School spaces to include newly constructed spaces on the north side of the campus and new spaces dedicated for middle school use that will be created by reconfiguring existing spaces within FDR.
- New construction of new classrooms (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors) and a new gymnasium at the northwest corner of campus for middle school use.
- Alterations of existing high school spaces for middle school use.
- Renovations of existing high school spaces for high school use.
- Alterations of the high school “pods,” the existing auditorium, and the library.
- Additions at the high school to provide additional space for high school students.
- Infrastructure improvements including exterior refurbishment, replacing the roof; mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems upgrades, and technology are also recommendations to be included in the scope of work at FDR.

The committee further recommends that “shared spaces” include the following:

- Kitchen, with a separate cafeteria for middle school students; a separate cafeteria for high school students.
- Library media center.
- Science & technology classrooms and labs.
- Arts and music spaces.
- A new, air-conditioned auditorium for 7 – 12 use located at the northeast corner of the campus.
- Athletic fields and athletic facilities.

Recommendations for site improvements at FDR include:

- Increasing the number of parking spaces from 500 to 690 spaces.
- Provide separate middle school and high school bus and student drop-off areas.
- Increase access for buses (80 buses) and cars (40 cars) at drop-off areas.

#### 4. PROPOSED MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASE 2

Athletic enhancements recommended at FDR include:

- A new exhibition stadium with an artificial turf, multi-purpose field with lights.
- 8-lane track with space for pole vault, discus/hammer throw, shot put, javelin.
- A single-story 1500-seat bleacher; and a 500-seat “visitor” bleacher;
- Exhibition lacrosse/soccer field; 500-seat bleacher
- 2 new practice football fields
- 1 field hockey field
- 1 natural turf athletic field
- 2 baseball fields
- 2 softball fields
- Basketball court
- 6 additional tennis courts
- Concession area/field house/press box
- Physical education trail
- Outdoor education area
- Maintenance/storage building

Recommendation #2:

*That the district purchase a facility, including the possibility of purchasing the current leased facility, to house its administrative offices rather than continuing to lease a facility for these purposes.*

Recommendation #3:

*That the district construct a new transportation facility on district-owned property to the east of the Ralph R. Smith School that would accommodate 150 buses and the district’s transportation, maintenance, and facilities and operations departments, including a new, safer access road from the school site exiting onto Haviland Road.*

Recommendation #4:

*That the district ask the voters of the Hyde Park Central School District to approve a bond referendum in Spring 2007 in the amount of \$182 million to do the work identified by the Facilities Steering Forum (FSF) in their report. This figure is based on current data and construction dollars.*

#### 4. PROPOSED MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASE 2

The committee discussed whether or not to recommend a multi-phased approach. However, the committee strongly recommends presenting this to the voters in one referendum. The committee's reasons include: the escalation of construction costs in a multi-phase plan; the potential for voter fatigue in multiple votes over several years; and, most importantly, that the district's needs are current and real.

The committee realizes that the Board of Education may choose to implement the master plan project in phases. The cost of scope of work would have to be adjusted should the Board of Education decide to change the vote date or implement the project in phases.

*Recommendation #5:*

*That the district direct the architectural and construction management teams to continue to refine implementation of the plan to ensure that the district maximizes its state aid potential; therefore minimizing the cost to taxpayers.*

## 5. THE FINANCIAL IMPACT

The committee realizes the cost of the Phase 2 proposal is very large, but the plan is comprehensive. As was stated earlier, this community can no longer postpone the inevitable – we need to make a commitment to the future of Hyde Park’s schools now. “Band-aid” approaches to address our needs will only cost the taxpayers more. Continuing to put off what must be done will, undoubtedly, result in more costly emergency repairs and higher construction costs.

The district’s financial advisors have provided the following information regarding the district’s financial position to undertake a building and improvement project of this magnitude; and the impact a project of this size would have on the taxpayers of the Hyde Park Central School District.

- *The district is in a good financial position to undertake a building project.*
  - The district has the capacity to bond up to \$298 million – its state-set limit of 10% of the district’s \$2.9 billion in assessed values.
  - The current total debt service is \$29.3 million, of which \$12.5 million is the local share.
  - The district is carrying no significant bonds, except for the Phase 1 bond, since no major projects have been undertaken for so long.
  - The district’s bond rating is “A” which is very favorable. Acquiring insurance on the bonds could raise this as high as “AAA.”
  - The district’s current state aid ratio is 62%.
  
- *Average Annual Cost*
  - The annual impact of the bond will be over 16 years.
  - The estimated average annual cost to the average homeowner enrolled in the BASIC STAR PROGRAM owning/residing in a home with a full market value of \$300,000 is estimated to be approximately:
    - \$679 for residents of Hyde Park and Clinton
    - \$677 for residents of Pleasant Valley
    - \$668 for residents of Poughkeepsie
    - \$657 for residents of Rhinebeck

## 6. CONCLUSION

The community of Hyde Park has a long and proud history regarding public education. In 1939, because of the community's belief in public education and their pride in Hyde Park and Franklin Delano Roosevelt's personal passion for education and this community; two new, progressive and "state-of-the-art" elementary schools and a new high school were built.

Sixty-seven years later, the community of Hyde Park is faced with the challenge of aging school buildings in a rapidly changing, global, 21<sup>st</sup> century society. Our buildings no longer represent "state-of-the-art" facilities; they are no longer adequate to meet the demands of today's higher academic standards; and they will not be adequate to meet the future program and enrollment needs of our students.

We now have the opportunity to bring the district's facilities into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and continue the proud history of Hyde Park by "re-building our heritage." The recommendations of the Facilities Steering Forum represent a vision that we believe will provide the best education possible for 21<sup>st</sup> century students; will preserve the community's investment in our school buildings; and best utilizes our community's resources and assets.

Please join us in becoming part of the solution to meet these challenges by "being informed" and "getting involved." The children and residents of the Hyde Park community deserve nothing less.