

MVNA Board Meeting 2/7/2022

Agenda MONTEREY VISTA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

6-8pm Via Zoom

In attendance:

Board Members Nickie Bach, Hans Jannasch, Jeannie Ferrara, Marta Kraftzeck, Charles Martin, Ray Meyers, Mike Pekin, Jean Rasch, Bruce Zanetta.

Guests: MPUSD Board Trustees Amanda Whitmire and Veronica Miramontes

Topic: Addressing neighborhood questions regarding the consolidation of Monte Vista Elementary School and Colton Middle School

Introduction

We appreciate your time to be here this evening to answer questions from members of the neighborhood surrounding the current plan to consolidate Monte Vista Elementary School and Walter Colton Middle School. Please note similar or related questions posed by neighbors, were combined to convey an efficient representation of the inquiry. We will be rotating the opportunity to answer questions between the two of you.

1. As our elected representatives, we'd like to give you a minute to share a little bit about yourselves by asking: **What do you value** in your elected role as a board trustee, and what is **one challenge** and **one goal** you have for student education in our district?

VM: Appointed in March 2020, work with restorative justice. Equity for the students of color.

AW: Two children at Monte Vista. Moved to area in 2015. Biggest challenge as a board is to give students what they need. Goal is every student gets what they need.

2. Why is the district considering changing the name of the newly configured school at the Walter Colton campus to Monte Vista? Walter Colton School has a rich legacy in education in our community as one of Monterey's first public schools. The school has occupied its current site for over 65 years. Preserving the name of this school as "Colton School" would avoid unnecessary confusion surrounding another school name in a new school location, its address, and emergency response to the proper site.

Please explain the decision to possibly change the new school's name at that location to Monte Vista.

AW: 2025 Vision task force move to TK-8. Parents excited about growing Monte Vista and maintaining school culture and identity. Growing Monte Vista and work with local agencies to avoid confusion.

VM: Community engagement wanted to keep school identity and culture.

General Project Costs for the new Monte Vista School at the Colton campus site

- 3· What will be the annual district savings for the consolidation of Monte Vista Elementary and Colton Middle School vs. leaving them both open?

VM: Estimated savings about \$500,000/year, not main reason for closing.

AW: No further comment

- 4· Where will the funds that are saved from the consolidation be used?

AW: Money saving will be used to sustain programs that we have started, full time music and mental health at every elementary school. Budgets fluctuate from year to year; state may remove the “hold harmless” funding. Savings to allow us to maintain what we have now. ADA support from state \$12,000/student, losing about 100 students/year but last year lost 250 students. Significant decline, closing 3 schools will not close gap.

- 5· The cost estimates for remodeling the new Monte Vista campus at the Colton site are referenced in three staff report locations.

a. The December 14th staff document states the estimated cost to be \$12.5M.

b. The January 25th staff document states the estimated cost to be \$8M.

c. Tomorrow’s board agenda asks for \$4.5M for “General Campus Modernization” for the Walter Colton site.

Please explain these estimated costs and what they will be used for. Please provide us with the final estimated cost for the school consolidated project.

VM: \$6.5M to convert 3 classrooms into 5 classrooms and ADA updates, \$1M for play structures and \$500,000 for drop off, final is \$8M. The \$4.5 million is not associated with school consolidation. Campus improvements in future.

AW: Colton is an older campus, updates needed for all campuses, MHS is just gorgeous now. Need to see what improvements needed.

JR: Reconfiguration and ADA is \$6.5 M, but Colton is not up to capacity, why that much money to reconfigure school?

AW: TK have special requirements. Rebuild inside in the most effective way possible. It’s just expensive. None of this has gone out to bid. “ADA upgrades will be significant, need a lot of ramps. It is my understanding that once you start work on a campus you have to bring the entire campus up to ADA compliance.”

- 6· Where will the funds that will pay for the reconfiguration of the new Monte Vista campus come from? Measure P or Measure I?

AW: “It will all be from Measure I.”

- 7· Will there be any remodel costs planned for the '22-'23 transition year for the combined TK-K and 8th graders at the Monte Vista site?

VM: There will be no remodeling costs at Monte Vista

- 8· Why was the school property adjacent to Colton sold if the expanded use of that campus was projected?

AW: I'm not sure exactly what property, lot line adjustment just under 5000 sq ft. this is a ravine, that area was not usable so it was a "be a good neighbor move, to help out"

New Monte Vista School at the Colton campus site

- 9· Is the final projected enrollment 469 for the combined TK-8th grade Monte Vista campus? How does that number break down for the elementary school and middle school grades?

VM: Monte Vista current enrollment is 417, projected to increase by 40 6th grade students, and 60 7th grade, Colton capacity of 889 students, project 2023-24 to 600 to 650 students, depends on transfer and enrollment.

HJ: Does the reconfiguration of the TK rooms add to the capacity?

AW: No, that does not change

- 10· Who will be the principal for **both schools during the transition year and after**? Will there be a librarian, counselor, and nurse at the site?

AW: Current staff at Monte Vista will move to new site.

HJ: Can you explain what positions or resources that the schools have?

AW: Therapists, counselors, equine therapy open to staff as well, full time health professional at each site. State funds for the health professionals, hope to maintain. Every school has a librarian, monitors, afterschool programs, custodians, nutrition.

PV: When school is split between MV and Colton how is staff going to work? One principal overseeing the 2 sites?

AW: Current Colton principal with 8th grade, TK at Monte Vista will be supervised by an academic coach, aftercare at both sites

- 11· Since parents of students attending schools that will be closed may select the sites to which their children will transfer, and we understand teachers will not lose their jobs in the consolidation of schools, **what will be the maximum class size for the elementary and middle school students and the student-teacher ratio? Will there be teaching assistants for any of the grade levels?**

VM: All class size is determined by collective bargaining agreement with MBTA, current TK-K is 24:1, 1-3rd 25:1, 4-5th is 28:1, and 6-8th 30:1. We do use some teaching assistants

AW: Many assistants spread throughout the districts. Class sizes might actually be lower and not at capacity.

72· How do you plan to integrate the different developmental levels in the new TK-8th grade campus?

- a. Will the middle school students be in self-contained classrooms, or will they move from subject area classrooms to different teachers throughout the day?

AW: 7th and 8th, will have core teachers some rotation to prepare for high school

73· Will there be a before and/or after school program at the new site for students?

VM: Programs will continue afterschool

74· Traffic is a concern around the new Monte Vista campus at Colton. Via Gayuba is a well-traveled route. Currently parents park on the residential streets to drop off/pick up students. How are you planning to address the safety issues with more traffic and with the younger children?

VM: Don't anticipate more cars than when Colton was a TK-8 before when it was over 800 students, we do have a traffic study that was attached. I see the traffic, I don't notice much traffic, never a standstill. Pick up and drop off site improvement. Any neighbors can address concerns.

JR: How would the neighbors best get in contact with you, or work productively with the school, what forum works the best?

VM: I would definitely recommend reaching out to PK

Will there be a staggered schedule for drop off/pick up for the different grade levels?

AW: No, staggered start due to siblings and busing

HJ: At meeting today at Monte Vista they indicated there was just a 15 minute window, that's pretty compressed? How many students are actually walking to school? Any idea?

AW: We don't have any information on that. MVNA and city to improve trails. Putting that idea out there for MVNA.

PV: Possibly bring that up to improve walking conditions in the city park

How many additional school buses and cars are estimated to be traveling up/down Soledad/Mar Vista/Via Gayuba/Walter Colton Dr/Via Toda Vista for the new TK-8 site?

AW: Not that we are aware of.

JR: Reconfiguration, perception in the community that the relative numbers of students will go up. Need more safeguards.

HJ: Will there be any traffic monitors and any intersections?

VM: Not now

PV: How would traffic flow? Is it one way at certain times of day?

AW: We have money earmarked for pick up and drop off for changes.

75. The board has exempted themselves from CEQA guidelines for the environmental impacts related to noise, traffic, and school lighting for this project. The neighbors still have these concerns. How will they be addressed? How best to address ongoing concerns?

VM: We are happy to address any concerns, or PK. Open to having the conversation.

The old Monte Vista campus

76. What process does the district use in deciding how a closed campus will be utilized?

VM: Use will be dependent on the districts need, preschool? Decision at a later date, nothing in stone. Hope to have conversation with the community.

HJ: Maintenance question, not cheap to keep a campus closed. How close is that to the \$500,000 you are saving? Target for vandals or problems.

AW: Much rather see it used. I would be happy to forward your question to Ryan.

HJ: Possible an adult school in parallel with a preschool.

Closing Questions:

77. It was noted that the first detailed description and costs of the consolidation Project presented in the staff report for agenda item 9B on January 25th was presented the same evening you voted on it. Usually there are at least two sessions allowed for public input before voting on proposals. **Can you speak to your board process regarding this?**

AW: "This feels like a trap." I hesitate to answer, we have been talking about consolidation for years now, as plan evolves the board is updated, in fact we delayed our vote over a threat of litigation over the move. I don't view it as a first-time hearing for anything, I'd have to review my notes.

HJ: Seems to be very little discussion and most votes are unanimous so the process is a little mysterious, there must be other meetings? How does the public get involved in that? Resolution, no discussion, voted then done. Little discussion. Where does that discussion take place?

AW: Community meetings for consolidations, lots of meetings on that issue. If you just attended the board meeting you would not have the background of the townhalls or community meetings that led up to that vote.

HJ: But the townhalls are input, where is the discussion before the votes?

AW: I think it depends on the issues, Covid discussions etc., varies from issue to issue.

VM: LCAP engagements, break outs, dialogue, concerns. I try to get information out to the community to incorporate engagement in our decisions.

78. We appreciate you meeting with MVNA this evening to answer questions from our neighborhood concerning the project of consolidating schools and telling us a bit about yourselves. Did you find this format helpful for coming to understand our neighborhood better? **Do you have any questions or comments for us?**

AW: I appreciate the opportunity to come. Get in touch with us, any concerns please reach out to us or PK.

Guest: Living in area for 3 years but only heard about this school issue through MVNA, not from the district. MPUSD should consider how share future communications with community.

SN: How is redistricting effect the district and the election of school board members?

AW: discussion first time of maps tomorrow now moving to 7 trustee areas. Monterey will have 2 trustees, same distribution but areas will be smaller.

HJ: what challenges for teachers do you see?

AW: No way around moving schools being disruptive. Teachers will be getting a modernized campus. Teachers will be paid for moving their materials.

VM: Excited to see teachers at the new campus.

Pickleball update:

- Jean: 2016 pickleball, 2017 funding of NCIP striping, problems arising with the increased number of players. There was a priority system that was established by Parks and Recreation, advertising through the Pickleball club. Proposed mediation, no Parks and Recreation involvement. Neighbors met with pickleball players with a Monterey staff person, 6 hours of negotiations. Jean, Susan, Ron Glizer, Jay Zwagerman, John Sovereign, Carol Iwaoka participated. Proposal for a 3-month trial to share the tennis courts, one dedicated court for tennis, one for pickleball that will hold two pickleball courts. After trial see if this worked and possibly make this a policy. Signage would require quiet equipment, one court tennis, one court pickleball.
- Susan: 3-month period to see how daylight savings time would affect the use of the courts. During trial period no restriping. If trial leads to a decision Parks and Recreation feels that court is due for resurfacing and can restripe. \$12,000 for resurfacing, \$3,000 for new nets, \$2,000 for a short fence between courts. Concerned about enforcement. Asking neighbors to help with enforcement. Pickleball players are finding other venues

and will probably look at another venue on city property somewhere. Total cost for the solution is \$17,000.

- Equipment box will be locked in an attempt to limit pickleball to two nets only
- Discussion of possibilities for striping, enforcement, conversion of basketball courts, engineering issues. City wants to keep basketball courts but needs to be resurfaced when funding again becomes available
- City and NCIP committed to a long-term solution
- Possibilities for friction, but there will be less noise for neighbors
- Pat moves we accept the work of the committee on pickleball solution, unanimous vote

NCIP Report

- NCIP committee was led to believe that there was a way to reprioritize projects, \$8M, that had been defunded
- But then the NCIP committee was told that all projects had to come back if they were wanted for public discussion under the Brown Act. Difficult for NCIP reps as it required so much work to get a project moved forward and vetted for community. Rich Heuer asked for meeting, discussions of NCIP options. Public is unhappy about having to repeat all the necessary work.
- NCIP meeting on 2/17, stay tuned for updates
- Monterey Vista projects have been re-submitted for approval
- Fuel reduction has been kept in budget through CIP and city budget.

Undergrounding

- Ray: Realization to market undergrounding is City wide and narrowing approaches to funding. Monterey utility user tax. Monterey has a very low rate currently. Breakdown 85% of funds from residential and 15% from commercial. Commercial is 5% rate, residential is 2%. \$3.6 M is the total, can raise residential rate, so if we raised all to 6% we could raise \$6.22 million more than currently have. How long would it take to underground the entire city, 108-109 miles of roads within city. 3392 residential meters underground, 1215 commercial meters underground, of total 14,838 meters in city. 30% of meters are already underground. Looking at moving quickly as deadline of July if wanted to get an initiative on the ballot.
- Discussion of moving undergrounding forward and funding sources
- Information at next meeting to vote on initiative, need 1100 signatures for ballot initiative