

Riley, Kate

From: A Robbart <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, December 15, 2019 10:24 AM
To: City Manager; Peterson, Lisa; Crane, Paula; City Council; ksalim@cpsd.us; schoolcom@cpsd.us; dbeard@cpsd.us; Riley, Kate
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: Tobin School & VLUS project / Callanan Playground & Fields

To the Cambridge City Manager and all concerned with the Tobin/VLUS Project/ Callanan Playground

Please reconsider the entire proposal presented to the community at the November 2019 meeting. None of the three options shown are appropriate or acceptable.

Given that the current building has many structural and design problems, a new one maybe the best option.

Please consider a new design in the context of:

A) The larger goals for all city's schools (e.g., stated goals for the number of students at each school – the numbers projected for Tobin/VLUS are not in line with this, adding pre-school throughout the city, not primarily in one or two schools, and the capital needs of other school buildings in the city);

B) Preserving the playground areas and fields for the needs of the whole city (e.g., Little League, city Summer Camps), this school population (during school and after-school programs), and the neighborhood kids and adults; (All the 3 designs proposed showed taking a significant part of the Callanan playground and fields, as though they were part of the school site, which they are not.) Further, the removal of the fields takes an important all-city gathering place for kids and adults, especially during practice and games, as well as a play area for the neighborhood. Also, it was difficult to see where the playground apparatus was to be, and the access in the Nov. "options".

C) Disturbing as little hazardous waste as possible, which is the safer solution;

D) Developing the best transportation system to all schools as well as within the neighborhood.

A smaller footprint, even if taller, placed nearest the corner by Fresh Pond Parkway and Vassal Lane will preserve as much of the playgrounds and fields as possible, it also can mean less hazardous waste disturbed, and will affect a butters, including those on Vassal, the least. Please also limit car traffic as much as possible – viz., please do not add an access road behind Alpine St., and do not create more drop-off and pick-up spots without first reassessing the city school bus system and other transport to schools.

Finally, the process itself has been very poor in the decisions and in communication. In the few prior meetings, there was never any indication of the proposed size of school population, staff, or the building. When it was presented, in November, no reasoning behind the size increase was explained, and we still do not have the projected staff size) and no group discussion was allowed. No one met with or requested to meet with a butters about this, and it seems a very fast schedule was planned for making decisions.

Thank you,

Ann Robbart

Born in Cambridge, Resident in current home 40 yrs.