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MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Steve Regner, Senior Planner
DATE: August 23, 2023
SUBJECT: LU32023-00260 Beaverton High School Supplemental Memo 2
ATTACHMENTS: Exhibit 2.6 Public Comment from Dick Habert

This memo is being provided to convey additional public comment received following the publication of the staff report.

Public Comment

Exhibit 2.6 E-mail from Dick Harbert, expressing support for the project.

Statement to the Beaverton Planning Commission
Beaverton High School Replacement
August 23, 2023
Dick Harbert, BAC Chairman

I appreciate the opportunity to make a statement in support of the rebuilding of the 109-year-old Beaverton High School (BHS) because the resulting new modern high school will be better for the students and the Beaverton business community.

I have a personal perspective on this project. Sixty-five years ago, I entered Beaverton as a freshman. Many good teachers helped me, and my fellow students prepare for our lives after high school. My four years at BHS prepared me for studying engineering at Oregon State University. I went on to work on large infrastructure projects around the world before returning to live in this community.

The BHS building is old. It has been expanded, survived fires, suffered leaking roofs, and required increased maintenance costs for its aging structure and systems. Notably, it ranks lowest of all District schools to withstand an earthquake. It has had a good and useful life but is no longer fit to serve our community.

In addition to the education provided, the high school benefits the community economically. Businesses who recruit talented workers and require a skilled workforce, factor schools into their decision-making process for site location. When people look for houses to buy, they value good school ratings. Superintendent Balderas and the School Board have responsibly for the education performance, but the mood or culture of the school building influences the learning environment by providing safety, modern teaching tools, and pride.

We need a new Beaverton High School and the voters agreed when they passed the 2022 bond measure that included the construction of a new facility.

I serve on the 2022 Bond Accountability Committee and am currently Chairman. I also served five years on the 2014 Bond Accountability Committee providing oversight to the School Board of building seven new schools and two major renovations to substantially improve the education facilities in the District.

Based on my experience, the District Facilities Staff has done an excellent job in managing the design and construction of new school facilities. For the BHS rebuild, the staff has selected and hired a competent Architect to design a school for our community. They have sought input from the community and tried to accommodate concerns.

I discussed concerns regarding the BHS rebuild with the staff. Two community issues that were raised are the preservation of Merle Davies school building and neighborhood parking during construction.

The historic Merle Davies building, named after an admired teacher and principal is located on the BHS property most suitable to locate the new high school. After an earlier renovation of the complete interior, the significant historic architecture value is limited to the exterior façade. Balancing the need to accommodate the number of students and classrooms within the limitations of the property boundary against the importance of preserving local history, it was determined the old building should be demolished but an appropriate remembrance of Merle Davies will be incorporated into the new building.

As with many building projects, on-street parking will temporarily become more competitive during construction. We anticipate that the City of Beaverton will enforce parking time limits around the commercial areas near the high school to ease the impact.

Given this background, I support the construction of the new high school because I believe it will benefit the students and economy of this community. I urge the Planning Commission to provide timely reviews and approvals to facilitate the construction schedule.

Thank you.