

November 3, 2005



Ms. Maria Rice  
Superintendent of Schools  
New Paltz Central School District  
196 Main Street  
New Paltz, New York 12561

Re: New Paltz Middle School

Dear Ms. Rice,

Pursuant to our discussions, we have compiled information for the purpose of comparing the existing New Paltz Middle School to that of a new facility. In order to maintain the appropriate perspective we are evaluating this building for continued use as a Middle school instructional facility. We have broken down our evaluation into several key components which we believe address the major points of comparison.

**Building Condition:**

The overall building condition was obtained by physical inspection made by representatives of this office and independent inspections made by licensed architects and engineers. This inspection encompassed the general condition of the building and the major building components. The detail of this report is included in the five year plan.

**Primary use of space:**

The original building was built in 1930 and is functioning as a teaching facility for grades 6, 7, and 8. The building has undergone two additions in 1956 and 1966 due to increased enrollment and mandated programs.

**Site Restrictions:**

The building is located in the Town of New Paltz, on the corner of an intersection in the downtown business and commercial district.

**Functional use of space:**

The building functions as an educational facility serving grades 6, 7 and 8.

**Health and Safety:**

The building has been maintained and presents minimal short term health and safety issues.

**Findings:**

It is noted the building functions as a middle school however, due to the number of additions, changes in enrollment, educational programming and State Education Department mandates it is questionable if the building can continue to serve the community for an extended period of time without major renovations.

With a new building the anticipated life would be a minimum of 30-40 years, with appropriate maintenance this life would be extended.

For the purpose of this study we have arbitrarily used 35 years as a base line for comparison.

The existing building will require major renovation to the infrastructure systems at all levels to serve the community for an additional 30-35 years.

**Electrical:**

The main electrical service switch gear has been updated. The remaining cloth wiring in the original building should be removed and the remaining wiring distribution system updated to current codes. This would include additional sub feed panels and circuitry.

**Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning:**

The system although presently heating the building adequately, does not meet the ASHREA standard for student occupied spaces. State Education Department (SED) standards require school buildings to exchange air in occupied spaces at the rate of 15 cubic feet per minute per person. Upon review of the existing system a complete replacement would be required to meet the present codes.

**Code Compliance:**

The building in general terms is within code compliance and a minimal amount of items requiring immediate attention are noted in the five year plan.

**Space Utilization:**

The building is being utilized at approximately 100% of its capacity; this is due to several factors. Since the building has had multiple additions, circulation is hampered and classrooms are inadequately sized to maintain present programs.

The connecting ramp was built prior to ADA regulations and occupies an inordinate amount of space. Most educational areas are crowded with spaces being utilized such as storage closets, lower levels of the building for special programs which are not conducive to the educational process.

The kitchen is used as the district wide cooking facility and is undersized with poor ventilation and utilizes off site rental location(s) for food storage.

**Site Restrictions:**

The original building has had multiple additions and parking is now at maximum. The district has added an exit and revised the bus drop locations to alleviate some of the congestion which is providing for a safer site. The site appears to be landlocked with any additional land purchases involving demolition of structures. It is unlikely that any further additions would be approved by SED unless special circumstances were to be proven. The playing fields appear adequate for a Middle School program; however drainage issues will need addressing for long term use.

**Health and Safety:**

It is apparent that health and safety have been a concern and where possible, work has been completed to maintain a safe and healthy building. Since the additions were completed prior to present codes the building remains "grandfathered" in many areas. This regrettably, does not remove the potential for liability, it only postpones it.

**Cost factors:**

Analysis of the reconstruction and infrastructure work identifies that more than 51% of the building will have some kind of construction impact. Under present SED regulations when any facility is impacted by this degree, all of the building must be brought up to current codes.

Our present pricing does not include the correction of the ramp due to the complications involved. In order to correct the ramp classrooms would need to be removed to achieve the desired ADA inclines or other means such as lifts or additional elevators would be required. If the ramp is to be enlarged this would then require new classrooms to be constructed to replace those displaced. Although feasible this will be difficult due to the present site constraints.

In order to bring the building into full code compliance, including the ramp, we anticipate a cost factor of \$14,000,000.00 to \$16,000,000.00 dollars, this assumes 2005 construction dollars and a 4% escalation factor should be added for 2006. In addition, soft costs and appropriate contingencies would need to be calculated. We would estimate this cost to be between 25 -30% of the overall construction cost and does not correct the site constraint issues or the overall lack of parking.

**Conclusions:**

Our evaluation was based on the physical structure of the building and, although we met with the buildings custodial and maintenance staff, we did not meet with the teaching or administrative staff. It was noted during our inspection many spaces are inadequate in size and configuration with the percentage of space allocated to non instructional being very high, specifically the square footage of ramps and corridors. The physical structure of the building is generally sound; however, to maintain the building as a teaching facility long term is in doubt. The style and structure of the building does not adapt to changing state mandates and new programs without the district incurring substantial costs.

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**Recommendations:**

A formal program and utilization study should be completed. The findings of which will define what programs are working well and which are suffering as a result of the buildings age and present configuration along with any cost impact to correct.

This study will further define any additional costs that should be anticipated for programs desired, but not implemented, along with future programs mandated by the State Education Department. Once all costs are known and compared a formal recommendation can be provided that is supported by the appropriate findings and data.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide this initial survey.

In the event that the District should desire to move forward with our recommendations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roy Herford". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Roy Herford  
President

RH/cah

cc: Mr. Richard Linden