

FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

The Facilities Committee this past year oversaw the completion of the redesign and expansion of the parking lot. This project had been under discussion as early as 2004 and initial planning began in 2005.

The added parking spaces and more efficient flow of vehicles during the drop off and pick up times at the school have been a welcome change from the previous parking lot layout. The drop off and pick up process is also much safer than before for students. This has been a serious concern of parents, staff and administrators for many years.

Committee member Bill Knight worked closely with Town Road Agent Ken Stocker to coordinate the loading, crushing and compacting of many tons of gravel from the Town gravel pit. Scott Macleay volunteered many hours along with his equipment to the effort and we can't thank Scott enough for his extraordinary efforts. Local contractors provided trucking of the gravel. Committee members volunteered many hours to make this project come in on time and under budget. If this project had been fully contracted out it could have cost taxpayers at least double what was spent to complete the work. We are fortunate to have a resource abundant town in both gravel as well as community members willing to volunteer their time to local projects.

The Committee continues to focus on reducing the building's overall energy use of fuel oil and electricity. Last year the school used 16,536 gallons of fuel oil. This compares to a prior three year average of 20,277 gallons used and represents the lowest level since 2002. We used about 174,000 Kwh in electricity during 2008 compared to a prior five year average of over 204,000 Kwh. Working with the School Board and Administrators, we are making progress in our concerted effort to reduce our carbon footprint.

We are fortunate to have the volunteer consulting services of long time resident Marc Rosenbaum. Marc has been a energy efficiency engineering design consultant in New England for many years in residential, institutional and commercial buildings. He has committed to working with the Committee as we develop strategies to revamp the school's heating and ventilating systems and upgrade the building insulation envelope. In the past few years we have completed infrared thermal scans and blower door testing of the building. Needless to say, many fuel oil dollars are being wasted. Marc has done energy modeling of the building to determine which building components contribute the greatest heating losses and to help determine the most prudent way to proceed to decrease these losses. Our goal is to reduce the use of heating oil by nearly 50% and also to improve the overall comfort level within the building. We think this is a very obtainable goal and one that, we hope, the Plainfield community will support.

Last fall, a mechanical design and building commissioning service company did a site visit and follow up evaluation report of our existing HVAC systems. A thorough examination of all the heating and ventilating units as well as the DDC controllers showed the original building and 1989 addition heating & ventilating units are in need of major overhauls or replacement. We have more than stretched the usual service life of the original building roof top units (RTU) and the ability to control the ventilation of the building is very difficult at best. This is one building component that we know is a major contributor to the overall heat loss issue.

This year the Committee made a request to the School Board to include funding to upgrade one classroom, which we are deeming a prototype room. The idea is to start by upgrading one room and then to evaluate the results, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The proposed plan is to install an individual heating unit and a heat recovery air exchange ventilator with individual room controls. The exterior walls and foundation edge would have insulation added to increase the "R" level (resistance to heat flow). Windows would be triple glazed with insulated jambs. Air sealing would also be done to eliminate air infiltration and resultant heat loss. In order to save costs, this project would be overseen by the Facilities Manager with assistance by the Committee.

This past year, long time school custodian Bill Fleming relinquished his role of Facilities Manager. We are pleased that committee member Bill Knight decided to take on this important role and hit the ground running the start of last summer. Bill's many years of experience in building construction will be beneficial to the District and the Committee as we move forward with our energy conservation planning.

I would also like to note that Bill Taylor, original Committee member since 2004 and past Chair has stepped down. Bill's insight and ability to marshal town personnel and resources was invaluable to the district as well as with the Committee's work.

Committee Members include Mike Higgins, Allan Ferguson, Bill Knight, Doug Cogan, Shawn Rogers and Thom Wolke.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Higgins

