

A workshop session of the Dover School Board was called to order by Chairperson Marjorie Fisher on Monday, March 19, 2007 at 6:40 p.m. in City Council Chambers.

A. ROLL CALL: Present were, Marjorie Fisher, Dorothea Hooper, Audra Lurvey, Carolyn Mebert, Beth Setear, Brandon Foye, and Doris Grady.

Also present were Superintendent John O'Connor; Patrick Boodey, Woodman Park School Principal; Barbara Szabunka, Horne Street School Principal; Duston Gray, Garrison Elementary School Principal; Nick Skaltsis, Future Needs Committee Chair; Redistricting Sub-Committee Members Linda Smart, Amelia Chapman, Sarah Dodier, Keith Workman, and Chrissy Thomas; Charlene Barlow, Richard Johnson, Mike Johansmeyer, Betsy Andrews-Clark, Pam Priester, Dover Citizens; and Jeremiah Rood, *Foster's*.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Beth Setear led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C: CITIZENS' FORUM: No one addressed the Board.

D: REDISTRICTING: Superintendent O'Connor provided a history of the on-going concerns with increasing enrollments at Horne Street School. He described events taking place as far back as November of 2004:

- November 8, 2004 – Superintendent spoke to Board regarding overall enrollment at Horne Street School being on the rise. The Board tasked the Superintendent to investigate and report back to the Board in February.
- February 14, 2005 – Superintendent reports options A, B, and C to Board. Board votes 5/0 to approve option C – “status quo” and directs the Superintendent to monitor overall elementary enrollments over the next three years.
- November 14, 2005 – Superintendent toured Horne Street School with Principal Szabunka to assess impact of increased enrollments at the school and reviewed enrollment data over the past four years. He will review district boundaries for possible street shifts and report back to the Board in February.
- February 13, 2006 – Horne Street School Enrollment Issues Committee studies the issues of overcrowding at HSS. Members of the committee include Brandon Foye, Marjorie Fisher, Kara Winton, Barbara Szabunka, Valerie Sawyer, Amelia Chapman, David Goldsmith, Renee Ward, Jen McCarthy, and Lisa Stacy. Kara Winton gave a report to the board: The committee is reviewing five possible options - maintain status quo; consider HSS full with all new enrollments to GES or WPS; install modular classrooms; redistricting; or transferring all kindergarten students to one school).
- March 13, 2006 – Kara Winton reported the Horne Street Enrollment Issues Committee met and narrowed options down to two - (redistricting or making Horne Street a “no vacancy” school).
- April 10, 2006 – Kara Winton presented the Horne Street School Enrollment Issues Committee recommendation to the Board. The committee agreed on a maximum enrollment plan that will have the least impact on class size and staffing. Once the following grade level enrollments are reached, additional students will be bused to Garrison Elementary School:
 - Grades Kindergarten and 1 - 20 students per class
 - Grade 2 - 22 students per class
 - Grades 3 and 4 - 23 students per class

- July 10, 2006 – The Superintendent reported on kindergarten and staffing enrollments to date for school year 2006/2007. Once again, there are staffing needs and concerns at Horne Street School. Many classrooms are nearing maximum capacity. The Superintendent will monitor and hold a district-wide review. The item will be placed on the September Agenda.
- September 11, 2006 – Request made to establish a long-range Student Capacity/Facilities Study Committee to review elementary school district boundaries. Item tabled until the September 25, 2007 workshop.
- September 25, 2006 – Future Needs Committee, (comprised of three sub-committees: (Student Capacity and Redistricting, Full-Day Kindergarten, and Facilities Renovations) to address presentation to School Board.

Nick Skaltsis, Chair of the Future Needs Committee, reported that forty members made up the Future Needs Committee. He then made the following statement regarding his affiliation with the Future Needs Committee:

“It’s the first time in 32 years that I’ve been a volunteer in this building that somebody is questioning my motives about why I’m doing this...I do not have any children in the school district and I do not have any grandchildren living in Dover. I don’t have a direct link to the School Department other than the fact that I’d like to see public schools improved... I’ve been a volunteer here in City Hall for various committees and requests continuously and consecutively over the last 32 years. I missed one year in 2004 for a personal problem...I’ve been here regularly. I was asked to do this. I didn’t volunteer, but I very much enjoyed being asked, and I thank you for the opportunity to do it. But the motive is to answer some questions. The School Board posed some questions about redistricting and the primary reason this 1/3 of our group met was a space issue at Horne Street School. The concern was, ‘We’ve got a space issue at Horne Street School, but we don’t want to move children out of Horne Street School and negatively impact another school.’ There was also a question of whether or not, if we were to put in full-day kindergarten or change the kindergarten program dramatically, would we have to add classrooms, or could kindergarten be accomplished by not adding classrooms? Will we be looking at any additional space to elementary schools in the next ten years? These are some of the things the entire committee looked at and these are some the items that we addressed in each sub-committee. The answer to those questions is in the presentation that was given to you a month ago.”

Mr. Skaltsis explained what information was collected by the Future Needs Committee in order to accomplish their tasks. The planning office provided information and maps regarding “where we’ve been, where we’re going, where we are now, “ with building permits and construction, as well as what the planning office felt was the direction the city is taking with regards to construction. All members of the Future Needs Committee received this information. Committees attempted, but were unable, to collect birth information from all five area hospitals to draw numbers to predict upcoming kindergarten class enrollments. Information regarding the past, present, and future growth potential in the city was presented by Chris Parker from the Planning Department to the Redistricting sub-committee at its first meeting.

Mr. Skaltsis then reviewed current Projects Before the Dover Planning Board. “There are 291 residential units approved in sub-divisions in the WPS district but yet to be built. Of those, 156 are single or multi-family housing units; 135 are “over 55” housing units. By law, 20% of the over 55 units can house children. The likelihood is that they would be older children but that’s not

necessarily controlled by any factor. Essentially, the WPS district, as it's configured today, represents 70% of those units that the planning office recognize are approved but not yet built. The Garrison school has the smallest number of 24 units, representing about 6% of the approved but not yet built units. Horne Street has 96 single and multi-family units in the current Horne Street district and they represent about 23% of the units approved but not yet built." Mr. Skaltsis then presented Mr. Chris Parker from the city's Planning Department to review information showing "where we could go under current zoning with future growth," broken down by current school districts. Mr. Skaltsis also asked Mr. Parker to briefly advise the direction he believes will be taken by the city's Master Plan Proposal, which is under review right now.

Mr. Parker explained he attended the first Redistricting sub-committee meeting to review potential growth areas for the different areas of the city, broken down by school district. The first map Mr. Parker addressed showed actual residential housing units developed throughout the city since the year 2000. Mr. Parker then reviewed a map for each district, starting with Horne Street School, identifying vacant single house lots and sub-dividable land (not including land constraints, such as wetlands, that would limit development). Mathematic calculations, using actual figures over the past 5 years, enable the Planning Department to create a mathematical calculation to develop impact fees for schools. It is based upon housing style and the numbers of students coming from which housing type. Currently, the range of the multiplier is from .4 students from a single-family home to .1 students from a mobile home. Condominium is not considered a housing type – it is considered an ownership type. Mr. Parker noted that demographics in the Garrison area indicate homes being built there cost \$300 to \$500 thousand. These are usually purchased as second homes and generate older students, not elementary students.

Ms. Mebert asked Mr. Parker to, "define sub-dividable land and how is it different from the vacant single-household." He explained that a single-family lot is one that has been created through a sub-division process and it cannot be 'cut-down' any more. In most cases it is a lot that will meet the minimum lot size but not much more. The 'red space' on the map is vacant space that is either four times the minimum lot size or has a lot of frontage that could conceivably be carved up smaller. Ms. Mebert asked if the property shown on the maps were currently for sale or on the market. Mr. Parker stated it was simply property that exists.

Ms. Hooper noted that, looking at the maps, it appears the largest potential growth is in the Garrison School area. "If they subdivide and this becomes smaller lots, they may very well build more modest houses." Mr. Parker agreed, but noted planning is working with a lot of landowners in the area to put land under conservation. "This is the district where we have the most potential to 'hide' land away from development."

Mr. Skaltsis asked Mr. Parker to address the Master Plan Process that has begun. Mr. Parker reported that one of the initiatives being considered is to develop surveys to collect community member input on how they would like to see the city develop. As a part of that process, there is also a committee dedicated to looking at economic and land use issues that confront the city, including looking more closely and specifically at topography, uplands, and wetlands. Another item being reviewed is the removal of the "density bonus" whereby if contractors leave extra open space, they can add a couple more units as a means to strengthen the controls on growth. One of the outcomes of the last Master Plan Process resulted in a requirement for sub-divisions to be "open space", where they have to leave 50% open space and cluster the homes closer together. The committee is also looking at trying to encourage use of the transfer of

development rights ordinance that looks to protect open space such as farm areas to promote the farm and promote infield development.

The Superintendent addressed the past five-year enrollments in the three elementary schools. He noted that projected growth over the next five to ten years are based upon current enrollments in kindergarten through grade 3. Adding into that are an anticipated 80 kindergarten students in each school to give a rough idea of the current population. Not factored into that projection are students based upon housing starts in the district. The average for a single-family home is .4 students (or for every 100 single-family homes, you can anticipate approximately 40 students spread over the K-12 continuum). He noted the projections have not been “all that accurate” and enrollments at Horne Street continued to climb, with 37 additional students enrolled than were projected. Dr. O’Connor acknowledged the need to look very closely at the projected enrollments over the next 5 to 7 years, including birth rate numbers, in an attempt to better project the future. He asked, “Does this mean that this is the final redistricting for decades to come? The answer to that is probably ‘no’. At some point in time down the road, (I said 3 to 5 years – it could be 5 to 7 years) a Board like this, there may be some of you still on the Board at that time, could be looking at redistricting. Oftentimes, redistricting is based on capacity. We have limited capacity at Horne Street. We have additional capacity at both Garrison and Woodman Park – thus the reason for redistricting. As populations shift, as housing starts wax and wane, we could see some changes in enrollments and in patterns. You look at the pattern at Garrison School; you’ve seen a continuous decline. We could continue to see that with the existing population even though we’re adding, possibly 100, 115 students there, we still could see a very slight decrease in Garrison. And then again, we could see an up-tick on that somewhere down the road, and I suspect we will, in that 3 to 5 years, all of our elementary school’s enrollments will start to grow

Mr. Skaltsis reported that he had asked questions of all of the elementary principals. He asked Ms. Szabunka what would happen if only 50 students were moved out of Horne Street Elementary. He reported Ms. Szabunka’s response was that it would not do her any good. “If I have a space problem, I need to take one grade level out of each class in order to alleviate my space problem.” The question to Dustin Gray was, if 110 students are moved to Garrison School, where will they go? Where are the spaces in which the students will be moved? What kind of impact will this have to your school? Do we need to build classrooms onto our elementary schools to accommodate full-day kindergarten? How many general classrooms can function at Horne Street and be considered a school that has the space necessary to accommodate all of its other programs? The answer was 20. How many general classrooms are available at Garrison if we were to increase their enrollment from 370 to 470? Would there be room for growth later should more children arrive? Those were the questions he asked with each of the ideas that came along. “In the end, the result was that Garrison could accommodate 110 pupils. That the range of 100, one class per grade level moving from Horne to Garrison, was essentially a way to eliminate Horne’s problem and not have an over-capacity situation at Garrison. The other positive sign of moving 100 pupils is that you’re essentially moving staff. By moving one class at each grade level, one staff member is likely to leave with the 20 (plus or minus) pupils at each grade level.”

Mr. Skaltsis reported the following final inventory of classrooms at the three elementary schools:

2008 Classroom Uses with Re-Districting in Place and Full-day kindergarten
Students Classrooms Used Net Classrooms

HSS	385	20	0
GES	490	24	3
WPS	430	23	9*
Net Available Classrooms			12 (w/ full day Kindergarten & WPS expansion)

***Pre-school is not included** and will use up 2 classrooms leaving 7 available (8 without full-day kindergarten).

Ms. Hooper stated she had repeatedly asked how redistricting would impact class size, and that she kept getting the response that the space was being freed to divide the resource rooms because too many people work out of it and to take art off a cart and put it in a classroom. She added, "I didn't hear anything about reducing class size – and that's really the issue with me. If taking those youngsters out of Horne Street is not going to reduce class size or it's just going to impact class size at Garrison, that I'd like to know."

Dr. O'Connor explained, "Class size is certainly a concern of parents... the Board has done an excellent job over the years of trying to maintain elementary classrooms that are reasonable. Currently, overall class average runs from 19 to 21 students in the three elementary schools. Hypothetically, 100 third graders, 30 of who are in the redistricted area and moving to Garrison. There are 5 teachers at Garrison, 5 teachers at Horne Street. So we have 100 and 100. We're moving 30 over. We move the 30 over here, we're bringing one teacher from Horne over. We now have 4 teachers with 70 students (at HSS). We now have 130 with 6 teachers (at GES). Their (HSS) class size will go up slightly of an average of 20 to a little over an average of 21. Their (GES) class size will go up - average of 20 is going to drop down to an average of 18. We've never been able to, in all three schools, have consistency. In any given year, we have class sizes of 23, 24 as well as class size of 16."

Ms. Hooper stated, "What confuses me is that we're actually moving the class size up in one school to accommodate another." Dr. O'Connor agreed, "...and down in another where, historically, they (HSS) have been up and this school (GES) has been down. Historically, it varies from year to year, student to student. If you were to look at the last 10 years of your class average, you get the sheets every month, you'll see, at times, there are third grades in the district that may have 17 and may have 23."

Ms. Hooper added, "The other space factor that is coming through in my email and discussions with parents, is that many parents feel that by moving people out of Horne Street School, they will now have room for all-day kindergarten. I think it's a mistake to tie the two together from the standpoint, I don't see in the budget we have the money, this budget that we're trying to get past, for kindergarten. And, if parents are basing their judgment on that one factor, I think somebody should say to them, 'Hey, this may not happen.'" Superintendent O'Connor agreed that the two need to be separated, stating, "This is a redistricting issue based on a school that is currently serving a large population...it's over-subscribed...they are beyond the limits of what the Board has said is acceptable in terms of the number of students per class." Ms. Hooper asked the Superintendent what state maximum enrollments were. He answered that he believed the maximums were 25 first through third grade, then 30 in grades 4 to 8 and 35 in high school. Ms. Fisher added, the rooms in Horne Street School are smaller. The Superintendent stated

that the rooms in Horne and Woodman Park were approximately 750 square feet where rooms in Garrison were generally 900 square feet. Ms. Skaltsis also noted the numbers being reported in Horne Street were “artificially low” since nine students are being bused to Garrison School and included in their enrollments. He asked the Superintendent, “If you take the nine students from Garrison and place them back in Horne Street, doesn’t class size then jump at Horne Street?” Dr. O’Connor stated the classroom sizes would increase fractionally in each of the five grade levels. Mr. Skaltsis added that when he plugged those students back into Horne Street’s numbers, he found that 75% of the classrooms in Horne Street were above 20 and only one classroom in Garrison was above 20. Additionally, when he took the nine from Garrison, there were no class sizes over 20.

Dr. Mebert noted there are many performance indices available for our students now (NWEA, NECAP) so that we could actually look and see if we are putting students at a disadvantage by having them in classrooms that are too small or having class sizes that are too large.

Ms. Fisher reported many of the concerns she was hearing from parents were upset over the fact there is no place in the school to teach ESOL; how there was no room for reading aides to work with students. She added, “It wasn’t so much the class, but how all these extra kids were just grouped together.”

Ms. Hooper asked Ms. Szabunka how many ESOL students are in Horne Street. She stated there are currently 24 ESOL students. There is a full-time tutor and a part-time tutor. The space allotted to them is only 8 ft. x 8 ft. and both cannot work in there. One finds an empty room or uses the cafeteria. Six to eight of those 24 children are in the area proposed for redistricting. Ms. Hooper asked Ms. Szabunka whether ESOL students are in their classrooms so they are not all in the room at the same time and whether the same would be true with the reading specialists. Ms. Szabunka stated that was correct. She added about 14 adults work in that area. The Speech Pathologist works with students out of that room also. “Not all the time, but here have been as many as 30 children and adults in the room at one time as they’re working with them. We try to avoid that; but we have used the hallway...and the cafeteria.” Ms. Hooper noted, “There’s no doubt you’re over-crowded – nobody doubts that. It’s just how we can work this.”

Dr. Mebert stated another issue that came up in emails was a safety issue and she asked Principal Szabunka if she considered it a safety issue. Ms. Szabunka there have been times when functions were being held in the building that it has been way over capacity. Additionally, the number of parents dropping students off in the day or coming in to speak with teachers has increased from approximately 25 to 125 in the past three years, and “that’s checking off kids, and making sure they’re going with whom we know they are going with.”

Mr. Skaltsis reported there were three surveys drawn up by the sub-committees: One on redistricting, one on kindergarten, and one on facilities and asked the Superintendent to review the surveys and the information garnered from them. He stated the committees “did survey the community including the three elementary schools, 8 – 10 p re-schools, the HUB, organizations that deal with our young children prior to school age to get their response to their interest in all-day kindergarten, and we also surveyed staff concerning the three aging facilities that we have. We shared that with the Board during different meetings. We do not have the final report on the facilities. That is coming.” He then reviewed the redistricting survey and shared some of the results that had been reported to the Board at earlier meetings. There was an excellent return

on the surveys. A majority of parents indicated it was important or very important to establish a balanced student enrollment between and among our three elementary schools. Also important or very important was maintaining class size that is equitably balanced between and among the three schools. The majority of responses felt the optimum class size for grades 1 through 4 was between 15 and 21. The majority of responses to the question whether respondents would support a plan to redraw school boundary lines to create a balance in student population (on a scale of 1- no to 5 - yes) was in the 4 & 5 range to support the plan. However, when asked if their children were identified for redistricting, the numbers changed dramatically. The numbers shifted down to the 1 and 2 range, which was "no." Survey information was compiled and made available online and at Board meetings. A lot of dialogue was held during Board meetings regarding the Future Needs Committee, including:

- October 9, 2006 – Superintendent asks interested community members to contact his office to volunteer for Future Needs Committees.
- Press Release given to *Foster's* –Articles reported in the newspaper on November 24, December 2, and December 26, 2006 prior to committee recommendations to Board.
- December 11, 2006 – Mr. Foye gave a Redistricting Committee Update.
- January 8, 2007 – Mr. Skaltsis provided an overview of actions and recommendations performed by committee members to date.
- February 12, 2007 - Mr. Skaltsis, Ms. Szabunka, and Mr. Boodey, chairpersons of the Future Needs Committee, Student Capacity and Redistricting Sub-Committee and Full-day Kindergarten Sub-Committee, presented final committee reports and recommendations.

The Superintendent then reviewed the following correspondence:

- January 2, 2007 - Superintendent letter and survey to all Horne Street and Woodman Park School parents.
- February 5, 2007 – Principal Szabunka letter to Horne Street parents inviting them to the February 12th School Board Meeting for Redistricting and Kindergarten Sub-Committee recommendations.
- February 22, 2007 – Superintendent letter to all Horne Street parents providing information requested by parents during a February 15th parent workshop held by the Redistricting Committee at Garrison Elementary School. Also invited parents to March 5, 2007 School Board Special Session on Redistricting.
- February 26, 2007 – Superintendent letter to Horne Street Parents regarding test runs conducted potential new bus routes.
- March 8, 2007 – Superintendent letter to Horne Street School Parents responding to questions and concerns raised during the March 5th Special Session on redistricting.
- Press Release given to *Foster's* –Articles reported in the newspaper on November 24, December 2, and December 26, 2006 prior to committee recommendations to Board.

Superintendent O'Connor explained that the area being proposed for redistricting was divided into two zones: East of Central Avenue, down Broadway (approximately 50 students) and Portland Avenue to Gulf Road (approximately 60 students). He then discussed the following three trial student transportation runs that were made in consultation with Laidlaw Transportation.

RUN 1: Superintendent & Laidlaw
Date: January 25, 2007
Start Time: 9:35 a.m.
End Time: 10:05 a.m.
Duration: 30 minutes

RUN 2: Superintendent, Laidlaw, Parent
Date: February 26, 2007
Start Time: 7:30 a.m.
End Time: 8:03 a.m.
Duration: 33 minutes

RUN 3: Superintendent, Laidlaw, Parents
Date: March 15, 2007
Start Time: 3:17 p.m.
End Time: 3:54 p.m.
Duration: 37 minutes

Trial Student Transportation Runs
OAK STREET

RUN 1: Superintendent & Laidlaw
Date: January 25, 2007
Start Time: 10:15 a.m.
End Time: 10:42 a.m.
Duration: 27 minutes

RUN 2:
Date: February 26, 2007
Estimated: 25 to 30 minutes

RUN 3: Superintendent, School Board Member, Laidlaw, Parents
Date: March 14, 2007
Start Time: 7:30 a.m.
End Time: 7:55 a.m.
Duration: 25 minutes

Mr. Skaltsis stated concerns had been expressed by many of the people who would be affected by the recommendation that they were not given enough notification of the redistricting process; that the first they had heard about it was when the actual proposal and recommendation was made. On January 2, 2007, every parent in Woodman Park and Horne Street received a detailed letter along with the redistricting survey, noting, "Again, we were mid-way through this whole process of talking about redistricting and one of the proposals was a multiple-school change, and a lot of this information was out there a good six weeks prior to coming in with the recommendation and coming to the public." He added that there had been

numerous articles published in the newspaper asking people to join (and there was a good outpouring of support for that) as well as many articles written by Mr. Clow and published in *Foster's* including information regarding the three topics the Future Needs Committee was going to discuss. He noted the transportation issues had been resolved by the Superintendent. He also reemphasized for the residents of Oak Street that the committee is recommending the north, Rollinsford side of Oak Street remain in the Horne Street.

Mr. Skaltsis then reported that the committee considered phased-redistricting but it was felt this would be taking a problem and moving it from one building to another. He stated, "If we are not going to consider moving one class at each grade level, moving less than that creates problems. I think we saw the results of those problems from the 2002 redistricting." He also spoke to other comments that were circulating regarding the 2002 redistricting. He noted it was stated "...35 pupils were moved from Woodman Park to Horne Street. The number is 53. 53 students entered Horne Street in September of 2002." He added, "There was a lot of concern that some parents believe that this was a rushed deal. I think that tonight, we hopefully have emphasized, that this has been a three-year process. That this has been looked at for a third time, and this third time, by folks independent of the School Board have taken a look at it."

He added that a great deal of time had been spent talking about Woodman Park School renovations and additions including class size, number of classrooms needed, and what was going to happen in the Woodman Park district. A number of options were considered including renting modulars for a year or two; empty the building and renovate it; spending several million dollars at the McConnell Center, renovate portions of it and move the children there; split sessions at Horne and Garrison, but none of those ideas seemed to work. One of the alternatives was, "Let's consider building adequate space on this building for future needs, obviously, but add the number of classrooms that we can empty half the building at a time into a addition and facilitate the renovation and rehabilitation of the existing structure. One of the ways of doing that was to sit down and take a very hard look at what's going to happen at Woodman Park School and what's going to happen at elementary schools. This was the 2005 era, but a lot of the components that went into that were, what happens to Woodman? Woodman is an essential school. Woodman is geographically in the middle of town, as close as we can get, in what configures to be a hallway. Woodman Park has more resources available than the other two schools for a number of reasons. Woodman Park can accommodate district-wide programs if this rehabilitation and expansion takes place." A question that was asked over and over was, what would be done with the addition after it was complete. He stated, "...one was to accommodate district-wide programs. But we looked at the growth. We sat down with the planning office in 2005 and looked at the potential growth of already approved sub-divisions in Woodman. And I sincerely believe that Woodman will see significant growth in students of the ages we're talking about. So, when we look at the surplus of classrooms at Woodman, I believe that a portion of them are going to be used up by the growth that is out there." He encouraged everyone to travel around town and look at the significant amount of growth taking place in the Woodman district.

Mr. Skaltsis went on to say that some people have suggested that the district "...put back what you did in 2002. Take the 100 pupils that you have on upper Sixth Street that are now going to Horne Street and plug them into Woodman Park School. Let's walk through what's going to happen if that happens: You have 420 pupils now plus 40 at preschool, that's 460. You add another 110 pupils, you're at 570. You add the slightest bit of growth from the already approved sub-divisions that are now under construction and immediately you have a 600 pupil school.

The answer to that is, 'well, let's move some pupils from Woodman down to Garrison.' Now what you've done is something that the committee really wrangled with. You've disrupted 100 families on the north end of town and plugged them back to Woodman. You've done that at a risk because Woodman is seeing a lot of activity. You've added another 50 families at least that you're going to want to move out of Woodman and send down to Garrison because you've got a situation where you're nearly at 600 pupils and you have simply too many children in the building. The committee looked at all of this; they looked at the various stages of impacting multiple schools. The least number of people impacted, with the shortest distances that they found, was to move the group that has been targeted down to Garrison School." Mr. Skaltsis asked the Board if there were any questions.

Ms. Setear stated, "Nick, I do appreciate your last comments because that's the question I was going to ask you and address to John as well. There has been talk that we don't have a long-range plan, and that's concerning, because if we're going to look at this again in a few short years, I think we are responsible to at least have thought about what we potentially see the future holding for redistricting. It sounds like that has been thought out; our mistake may have been we've not put it out to the public. The second question is, where do we anticipate the largest amount of growth is going to take place, and apparently with some amount of certainty, it would appear the largest amount of growth will take place in the Woodman Park area."

She went on to ask, "I do also believe there will be additional growth taking place out in the upper Sixth Street corridor. If there are 96 undeveloped housing lots right now, that potentially could be a significant number of students in Horne Street School. It could be in a very short amount of time that Horne Street is back in the position of being overcrowded. If we extricate 110 students from Horne Street now, three years from now, potentially there could be 100 more students in Horne Street and we're right back where we started in relatively short order because it looks to me those housing starts need to take place before 2009. Do we want to consider that as well in thinking about this plan so that we are not accused two years from now of not having thought of it?"

Mr. Skaltsis responded, "First, you're not back where you are because if you leave Horne Street alone, it would seem you'll be over 500 pupils, if not in the next registration, certainly in the one after that. So the idea of moving 100 students out brings you down to the 400 which is a reasonable capacity for the smallest school in the district with the tiniest core facilities. Do you have the potential of having another 100 pupils? Sure. I think I mentioned this last week, there are circuit breakers you could put in that would automatically begin to move streets that are along the Woodman/Horne corridor - County Farm Road, County Farm Crossroad, Upper Sixth Street. I believe those areas, over time, will be moved back to Woodman Park School. I don't think there's going to be a choice but it will be over time and what I thought the School Board wanted was a situation where this kind of dramatic move doesn't have to take place again. If you established a policy where you capped Horne Street School at 400 full-time equivalent pupils. And, when there's more than 400 pupils, there is an automatic change of districting to move Horne pupils to Woodman Park to keep that number at this level. So you're only moving a street at a time. You're not extending a new school bus run because you're taking an existing run, in this case Watson Road, they go all the way to the river essentially. They would cross the river and go up and down County Farm Road, or wherever is needed, in order to capture the number of students to keep it. It is sort of the reverse of what you're doing now. I heard last week, \$30,000 to ship pupils from Horne to Garrison because we have a situation where those pupils push the policy of 20 pupils per class, K through 2, up out of the 20 pupils. You could

have circuit breakers on both ends. The fear at Garrison is, what if Garrison then peaks over 500 pupils. If you put 110 in, you get Garrison up to 470 pupils. Garrison goes to above 500 pupils...you have the corridor of Durham Road where you already have school buses heading to Woodman going down through that area that you could take students out of Garrison in future years moving them into Woodman – as circuit breakers – to keep caps on both elementary schools and moving them to a school that obviously will have space. But I don't think it has to be this dramatic...You have a situation where you have an opportunity – this is one very dramatic change for 100 families, there's no questions about that – but after that, I believe that the growth can be managed.”

Ms. Hooper asked, “Then why not wait until Woodman Park is finished? The Superintendent explained, “Because when you move the Horne Street over to Garrison, you don't have an issue. Horne Street's at an appropriate level. Garrison is at an appropriate level. There is no reason to be thinking about the safety valve at Woodman Park. That will come two years, three years, four years down the road as we see our enrollments continue to grow. Horne Street enrollment gets up to 400, we think about, are there streets in which we can pull 20 to 30 students off and move them to Woodman Park. When Garrison's enrollment continues...”

Ms. Hooper explained she asked because, “We have to redistrict, I know that. But, I just think we're just trying to do it with one hand tied behind our back. If we had all three schools up and running at the same time, it would seem to me that you wouldn't have to make such a drastic change. You could move very much lines that area already existing just blocks over.” Superintendent O'Connor explained, “You would still have to move 100 students from Horne Street School. If you moved 100 students, HSS to WPS that has the capacity, you're probably going to have to move 50 students from Woodman Park School to Garrison. You're now moving 150 students.” Ms. Hooper stated, “But it seems to me, you would then have down the line, a handle on minimum change.” Mr. Skaltsis noted, “The extra 50 students you're moving is only to balance the schools. It's not going to impact future growth.” Ms. Hooper added, “I understand all that, and I'm certainly in favor of redistricting...but if the date is correct that we've been given that Woodman Park will be up-and-running in September 2008, doesn't it make sense to wait until it's up-and-running and see how it might work and make a longer commitment to it? I'm thinking in terms of, in a couple of years we'll be back here doing the same thing. I know we're going to redistrict again. But, I'd like not to have this kind of an issue. I'd like to see us be able to have a plan in place where we can have shifts, as Mr. Skaltsis said, that are not monumental to parents...I'm not suggesting not to redistrict, I'm just saying, you may want to wait until all elementary schools are in play and do it at that point.”

Ms. Setear asked Mr. Skaltsis to explain how the Board might redistrict upper Sixth Street after the anticipated growth in the near future. “They're clustered housing, so will three of them go to Woodman Park once we've capped Horne Street? For families to consider neighborhood schools, you also want to consider neighborhoods where children live. I would want to think about how we might do that – would you do a whole neighborhood at one time or just the number to keep the cap? I would be curious as to what the future might be.” Mr. Skaltsis responded, “It's easier always to define what it is you have to do. When the districts have always been developed, this is the first one that doesn't have real hard territorial boundaries. IN the area that's being redistricted, Central Avenue, Oak Street's the end of town, Eliot's the beginning of another state, and the river. It's clearly defined so it takes the politics out of it. What you're describing is really political. It's a real problem. A policy could be written that it's simply the Superintendent's call to balance off the schools.”

Ms. Mebert questioned whether there had been any consideration of expanding Horne Street School. Mr. Skaltsis stated he felt it would be difficult. He explained that during the four-classroom addition in 2001, significant money was spent on retaining walls because of the topology of the lot. "That doesn't answer the question is, additional space. Garrison is 69% occupied. We just spent \$4 million dollars down there on the core facility and we're at 69% occupancy. Horne is at 120% occupancy. Although it sounds nice, the other issue you're going to hear (next month) is you're going to see a huge number just to keep these 50-year old buildings going. The idea that we could go and ask for additional classrooms, when folks know we have space in the south end of town, I think would be politically unpalatable and not approved. We're going to be spending tens of thousands of dollars to make 50-year old structures safe, ADA acceptable. Life safety concerns eliminated, and usable. Moving 50 students anywhere, I believe is problematic." He then explained how moving 50 Horne Street School students to Woodman and 50 to Garrison would impact class sizes and staffing in each building. He stated his belief that it would require two or three additional teachers because that would not move whole classes to another building with their teachers. If you take 20 fourth graders out of Horne and move 10 to Garrison and 10 to Woodman Park, that would solve Ms. Szabunka's problem, but it is a problem when you separate them. "If they don't go with a staff member, you're going to create a situation where that staff member that leaves Horne is going to go to one of the schools, and it's possible the other school is going to have significantly higher than 20 students per class. One of the things about being on the School Board is, a lot of it's about equity... That's what started the whole 2002 debate. Garrison was crowded. The School Board eliminated an assistant principal at Garrison School. 'You've created problems at Garrison School. We have too many kids at Garrison School. We don't have a large enough school. You've got to move kids north. We're going to have building going on down south. It was about equity'. Class size was too high, we didn't have adequate administration, you're building new rooms onto Horne Street, move them north. That was all about equity and that's the balance. It's very difficult."

Dr. O'Connor noted that there was a lot of development in the Garrison neighborhood during 2002/2003, "...and yet our enrollment has continued to drop at Garrison. Even with that development over that six-year span. I think Mr. Parker hit on that – much of the development in that area has been very pricey homes. As a result, we're not seeing the young families come in, at least in that time frame. Mr. Skaltsis noted the result was an increase in middle and high school students. "We wound up having to put two additions on a brand new middle school." He added that during the discussions of adding to Woodman Park School, consideration was given to have that school offer district-wide programs, including pre-school, SMART start, self-contained classrooms (2) at Garrison.

Ms. Grady asked what the cap was that the Board implemented at Horne last year. "At what number did we decided that you started transporting kids to Garrison." Ms. Szabunka explained the cap was 20 per class in kindergarten and grade 1, 22 in grade 2, and 23 in grades 3 and 4.

Ms. Grady stated, "If we had that nine students back at Horne, that means the smallest school we have would have 483 kids in it. The largest number in the whole city in the smallest school. We had to take 9 youngsters, leave their home on a bus with their regular friends, go to their own school that they've been to, their friends get off, and those youngsters had to stay on and drive down to Garrison. I think that would have been a traumatic situation for 9 youngsters. If nothing happens in redistricting, it looks to me like that number is going to get bigger because

we can't leave 485 kids at Horne Street School. We've got to figure out where we're going to put them this year. We can't put them over at Woodman this year, not with all the construction that's going on. So are we going to take more than 9, maybe 50 kids, leave home, stop off at their own school, and then drive off down to Garrison? I think that's more traumatic than anything that the committees have worked on at this point. That bothers me to have to do that. But, we can't leave 483 kids there. So what are we going to do with them? In all fairness, the numbers for 2006, Garrison has 379 and at Woodman, which is a much bigger school has 454. They have less than Horne has – 30 some-odd kids. I think we have to make a decision a decision of some kind. And, when it comes to redistricting, it's not going to change. We don't know who's having babies, when they're going to have them, where they're going to grow up, when they're going to reach where they are. As I said before, it went back to the '70's, only we didn't get a chance to say, 'We want some input.' We got a card and the card said, "your child is assigned to Sawyer or 'your child is assigned to Woodman' and they changes 3 years in a row. I wasn't very resilient but the kids were. We have to make a decision. Say Woodman Park is not finished in 2008 – that pushes you to 2009. For two years are we going to put these kids in this situation?"

Dustin Gray, Garrison School Principal, presented the follow redistricting transition plan and timeline for students moving into Garrison School:

Redistricting Transition Plan for Garrison Elementary

1. Mid-April (11-14) Support Specialist (Principal, Behavior Specialist, Guidance, Nurse, ESOL Special Education Staff etc...) travel to Horne Street School for brief assembly and introductions to students transferring. After the assembly the GES and HSS counterparts will meet for discussions in preparation for transition and placement.
2. Week before Spring Break (April 18-20) Transition Students will travel to Garrison for a tour of the building with Support Staff members and Student Council reps and lunch.
3. Tuesday, May 15th @6:00 will be an Open House Night for Transition Students to bring their parents to GES for a tour. Teachers and Parents (PTA meeting) will be on hand to answer any questions that parents might have in regards to process and to schedule meetings with individual members of building if needed. There is a PTA meeting that night as well and parents will at that time be made aware of a "Parent Only" Social for parents to meet with current GES parents and talk about any concerns that they might have. The PTA will also have a goody bag for the students and parents will receive a copy of our parent handbook.
4. The weeks of May 21-25 and 28-June 1 will have scheduled times blocked off for parents to meet here at the school for tours if they were unable to make it to the May 15th night.
5. A few items must be resolved quickly for this plan to be effective:
 - Tours of the school are ongoing throughout the summer as well as the school being open for the summer for parents to come and visit.
 - Redistricting needs to be voted on as it has implications on scheduling and student placement as well as building adjustments both physically and with personnel. This process usually starts the beginning of April.

- Transition takes time for matters like this and any delays could push this schedule into June which will be much harder to coordinate with the entire end of the year activities happening at each building. June should be set aside for “buffer time” with any delays as well as easing students’ anxieties about the process.

Mr. Skaltsis addressed Ms. Setear regarding the concept of the circuit breakers. “One of the ways that this could be handled, if a policy would be in effect that capped Garrison and capped Horne, but reached into those districts to grab children to go to Woodman, the areas could be articulated in the policy. It’s up front. ‘These are the areas that work for bus routes; these are the areas that work for the clusters of children’. If you need to move 5 you go this direction; 10 this direction; 15 – so you know up front exactly who goes. It doesn’t become the political issue of who goes three years from now. It is part of the policy.”

Superintendent O’Connor summed up the evening’s presentation. The information presented was what was provided to the redistricting committee when they formulated their recommendation to the Board. He thanks the members of the committee. He ended by stating, “The whole idea of redistricting, whether it’s elementary, middle, high school, or the entire community, it’s probably one of the most challenging decision that any School Board faces. This is not an easy decision to make. It involves, in this case, over 100 students, 70 or more parents, who are concerned that their child could possibly be up-rooted in their elementary years and moved to another school. That’s not an easy decision for School Boards to make. I recognize the challenge this has become; it’s not easy, and I know that all of you are going to spend a great deal of time (and you have) looking at the information, talking to people, responding to emails and telephone calls, and will make a decision sometime in the next month.”

Chairperson Fisher then opened the meeting and invited citizens to address the Board with questions or comments concerning the redistricting proposal.

Richard Johnson, 3 Deer Creek Run, commented: “At a minimum I thank you for at least conducting this session because it did basically substantiate what we’ve been telling you for the last month, which is basically that the sub-committee didn’t do anything. If you look at this, this is basically an amalgamation of how the process stumbled forward for the past three years. This is no work product from the sub-committee. I have asked Mrs. Szabunka three times, and she’s been very kind with her time, I want to congratulate her on that, I asked, ‘Was there any regression analysis over the last five to ten years to see where the kids have come from in Horne Street School so we can see, on average, what’s a dependable count, historically the he sub-committee didn’t do it. ‘Did the sub-committee take all of the in-transit construction project detail that they received back in November from the planning department and mathematically quantify that?’ No, we didn’t do that. ‘Did you do any pro-forma analysis based on the maps? Basically everybody’s seen all the available land in the Horne Street School district is in the upper Sixth Street area or it’s on the other side in the Route 16B area. There’s no available land with the exception of one parcel in the area to be redistricted. ‘No, we didn’t do that.’ So the sub-committee didn’t do anything in terms of basically, any quantified, empirical analysis. Because I’ve asked three times and she’s been very kind to tell me, ‘No, we didn’t do that.’”

Mr. Johnson added, “As discussed tonight –per capita class size. It’s not going to go down significantly at Horne Street, and we’re not going to benefit in any way over at Garrison. It’s

basically going to stay at 20.5. We've already sent you the numbers, we've already sent you the calculations that the sub-committee should have done. Didn't do it. We had to do it for you."

Mr. Johnson continued, "Woodman Park School – Mr. Skaltsis says, in his opinion, based on the numbers that he's seen, 70% of the units are going to be in the Woodman Park district. That may be true, however, think about the numbers that are going to be condominiums. You've heard Mr. Parker tell you, you've heard me tell you, basically a condominium, for every 100 units, generates 11 students. One hundred single-family homes, generates 37 students. We're talking about less than one-third, in terms of the rate, for condominiums. And a lot of what's going to be going into Woodman Park. So the units might be 70%, but not the number of kids."

Mr. Johnson asked, "So, what are we arguing about here for the next upcoming school year. We're arguing about, per Ms. Szabunka, three classrooms. One for art. She told you last week the art teacher doesn't have a classroom with running water. But, you have running water in all of the classrooms – they all have a sink. The resource room - She wants to take one resource room where approximately 14 aides come and go with their educationally disadvantaged, behaviorally disadvantaged children. Who are supposed to be mainstreamed into the classroom. That's the reason they have the aides. She's saying, 'Sometimes we have up to thirty people'. I've talked to the teachers. I've said, 'Where do the aides go with their kids?' For the most part, they stay in the classrooms. So, I'm hearing different things than from what Ms. Szabunka is telling us. And then we've got the English as a Second Language classroom. Right now, it's an 8 ft. X 8 ft. room. The room at Woodman Park School, as I've been informed, is roughly the same thing, down in the cellar. Additionally, from asking the teachers at Horne Street School, 'How many kids are in there with the tutor?' One to two. It's not as if you've got 10 kids packed into an 8 ft. X 8 ft. room. It's not the Black Hole of Calcutta. Plus, you have the cafeteria, book-ended in each the morning and afternoon when there's no lunches going on."

Mr. Johnson stated, "There's no critical mass here. We've talked about the per capita, we've talked about freeing up three classrooms: Art, English as a Second Language, and a second resource room at the desire of the administration. Yet you want to forklift 110 kids – politically gerrymander them from across the river- and send them south. I don't see the logic in that. And, we keep raising that issue. One thing I have heard tonight, which I articulated back in the beginning of March is, if you just look at the growth, you just look at the numbers, this city has got to redistrict south. Growth from the north has got to be pushed south. You've got the available capacity now on the south end of town, but now basically, everything's got to be pushed. You've got to push kids from Horne to Woodman and Woodman to Garrison. And visa-versa five or ten years from now, based on the demographics. That's all we've been asking for, basically to wait until Woodman Park is done, and come up with a plan that will hold for five to seven years. The last redistricting didn't hold for one year. By 2003, you were over your magic 400 at Horne Street School. There's no plan. There is no long-term plan."

Mr. Johnson continued, "Enrollments will grow. I do agree with the Superintendent on that point. But, you're going to have a minimum of 7 vacant classrooms at Woodman Park School. The public as a whole is not stupid. They've already told you, 'What are you going to do with that room?' We heard it on February 15th at the informational session at Garrison School, Mr. Skaltsis said so, 'We're going to have to redistrict in two years. This is not the last...' We agree! We're just saying, hold off until Woodman Park is finished. Mrs. Grady said, 'Well, I'm not certain it can be done.' If Woodman Park School is not done by September of 2008, both the School Department and this Board is going to look very foolish. I'm ignorant whether or not

there are any either incentives or penalties written into that contract, but that's standard in the construction business. Additionally, you're going to look foolish because you just asked for a \$3.1 million cost overrun. One of the bids was for \$10 million; you went for the low bid of \$8.1 million. That builder said you're not going to be able to do it. That builder was right, that builder with the \$10 million bid that lost because you went with the low bid."

Mr. Johnson added, "You know, one of the things we haven't really addressed, I've tried to stay above the fray over this, is basically, but I have said, this whole issue of identifying our area of town for the proposed redistricting, was myopic. Basically, 'Lets find 100 kids'. On February 15th when the session broke up, you had already heard from about 60 parents at that public session at Garrison School, that a number of parents never received any notice that this was happening. Myself and one other parent walked up to Mr. Foye after the meeting and we said, 'Was the upper Sixth Street (at the time we didn't that there were 98 kids up there, commensurately, about the number as being proposed in the area that I live in, we asked Mr. Foye point blank, was the upper Sixth Street area actively considered?' His response was, as he looked down at his shoes, 'Well no. There were political concerns."

Mr. Johnson continued, "Additionally, there's not going to be five teachers going these 110 kids to Garrison School as far as I understand it. From the article that came out on February 16th, the day after the public session at Garrison school, the Superintendent says two teachers are going to go. We've been basing our numbers on that in terms of per capita. I want to be very clear. Five teachers are not going with 110 kids. Per the Superintendent, right or wrong, the paper says two. In terms of the request to hold off for one year, we are basically saying, come up with a consolidated plan once Woodman Park is done. We actually agree – we feel that basically, what I call equa-distant lines, Mr. Skaltsis basically calls circuit breakers, that's what we're looking at. If you've got a street that's a mile from Garrison or a mile from Woodman Park or a mile from Horne, that's what you're looking for in the future to basically – to use the term circuit-breaker, what I call equa-distant. You're up 50 or 100 one year based on demographics, 'We're very sorry but you're going to have to go to another school.' But you don't have this issue of trying to forklift 110 from the northeast section of town, 7.5 miles away, and move them all the way to Garrison. "

Mr. Johnson added, "I really don't see a lot of value in the argument that there's an extra 150 square feet per class over at Garrison versus Horne Street. In second grade, I was in an experimental classroom that was about 1400 square feet. We had two teachers. Size means nothing. I can remember clearly, when I graduated at the end of second grade, there were plenty of kids with two teachers and 1400 square feet of educational learning space that still didn't know how to tell time. You're education boils down to the quality of the teacher."

Mr. Johnson continued, "Safety issue? I don't really see the value in terms of, 'we're overcrowded, what if there's a fire?' Remember the maximum class size right now at Horne Street School is 22 kids. Your average teacher is intelligent enough to get those 22 kids lined up and get them out of the school. The bus rides, yes, Mr. O'Connor did a great job recounting all three bus rides. But, remember, bus ride number one and bus ride number two were invalid. That's the reason you had to do bus ride number three."

Mr. Johnson explained, "I don't understand why the survey related to redistricting went out in January if the sub-committee was formed and started its work in November. You would think that theoretically you'd want to send the survey out in September or October, so that all of the

responses...could have been digested by the sub-committee ahead of time when they started their work on the approximately the four meeting that they had.”

Mr. Johnson reiterated, “There have been some comments made tonight, ‘Well, this is the end of a three-year process.’ Remember, years one and two, as far as everything I heard, please correct me if I’m wrong, was not a formal process. You said, “Well, we’re looking at it...and we’re going to get back to you...’ but it’s all administration and members of the Board. It wasn’t anything basically formalized. Yes, this year it’s been formalized. But remember, a number of parents mentioned at the February 15th open session at Garrison School, they never received any communication. Subsequent to all of our complaints, there have been three letters sent home to us. If there was just one letter, that came home to us some time at the beginning of the school year that said, ‘Redistricting is a serious issue. We want you on these sub-committees’, you would have had a much greater turn out than what you already received.”

Mr. Johnson added, “Another issue in terms of, ‘Well, we looked at shortest distance.’ But, did anybody consider shortest time?...We’ve already raised the issue at the February 15th meeting, that the issue of going down Whittier Street to Washington Street to Arch Street is a straight shot; one light between upper Sixth Street at the corner of Whittier and Sixth, all the way to Silver Street. Was that raised? No, because as far as I can tell, once again, Mr. O’Connor and Mr. Skaltsis reminded the sub-committee, ‘Well, there’s construction going on at Woodman Park, please take that in consideration,’ and Well, there was redistricting five years ago. Take that into consideration.’ That pretty much left only our area with 110 kids. This has been a one-shot deal. The sub-committee didn’t even come to you with more than one recommendation for you to even think about...Let alone the empirical evidence. That’s the reason we’re here tonight. There’s was no calculations. There was no empirical evidence other than, problem statement, 110m kids, get on the bus.”

Mr. Johnson offered his opinion, “Garrison School 69% capacity right now, after a \$4 million addition, yes that’s a problem. Once again, the kids who are being proposed to be redistricted, the parents or children did not cause the problem. What caused the problem is lack of long-term or even mid-term demographic planning.”

Mr. Johnson addressed Ms. Grady: “Ms. Grady, I don’t see any trauma to the kids in terms of those nine children who currently have moved into the Horne Street School district and have to go to Garrison based on ‘the inn is full.’ Most parents are smart enough to contact the school and say, ‘Do you have room?’ What’s worse? 9 kids who have moved into the district or 110 kids who have been in the district going to Garrison? It’s a question of balance. We keep addressing the facts with you, the sub-committee say, ‘Well, we did a lot of work.’ Yes, you did a lot of work in terms of analyzing where you’re going to pick up the kids once the decision was made. But in terms of any empirical calculations or equity or fairness in terms of looking at multiple options – did they look at (other options)? No, because it isn’t in the recommendation. There’s no minutes, there are no work papers, nothing. I think this thing has been poorly since the beginning. I think based on the per capita student counts, the educational impact of our kids being bused across town, and the fact that what we’re really arguing about is art on a cart, a second resource room, and 750 square feet for English as Second Language when there will be two to three kids in there at any one time, I can’t even believe that we’re arguing over this.”

Linda Smart, Librarian at Horne Street School and member of the redistricting sub-committee stated that she took issue with the lack of respect that had been shown to committee members.

“Comments about, ‘when I went to school;’ we all could say, ‘when I went to school.’ Well, when I went to school we didn’t have SPED issues; children in a resource room. We didn’t have those children in a classroom. People hid those children away. Today we educate them. We include them in our community. When you went to school, we did not have computers that we needed to put in our classroom as a learning and teaching tool. Our kids live in the information age and these are important tools that they need to use every day in their school life...It would be really cool to be able to have art in a classroom where kids could spread out and not have to worry about setting up the space and cleaning up the space that takes time away from their 40 minutes of art. We have reading groups in our foyer. Our 14 aides who come into the classroom to help kids, they do work in the classrooms. But there are times when they have to find a space to test kids, to work with kids in a smaller group that might need more help or might need some enrichment. They might go to the cafeteria. But, maybe there are three other groups in the cafeteria. The cafeteria echoes. It’s very difficult to work with that many groups in one space. They come into the library – great, if I don’t have a class. Go into the ESOL room – an 8 ft. X 8 ft. room. She has books in there for the students; she has a desk to work with the students; she also needs a computer in that space. So, go in there with bookcases, with a computer desk, with a desk where she works with students. It’s right next to my area where I read to the kids. We share that space together. OT is in a small room next to my office. It is a very tiny room. Those children having OT deserve to have a bigger space. (Comments about the committee), never looking at anything and just deciding...it’s very disrespectful. I was asked if I knew how to read a map. I was insulted and it was very condescending. We need to be respectful of people. She went on to describe storage issues and the need to move the equipment for fire department inspections. She added the school needs space and her belief that redistricting is traumatic for every one. Her children were redistricted while at Garrison but, “You know what? Children adjust. They adjust much better if we are respectful and have a positive attitude about it. How many of our children have listened to their parents talk about this process, and what kind of attitude are they going to have toward the people involved in this process? Please, I ask for respect.”

Amanda Russell, 20 Cranbrook Lane, stated her belief that special’s teachers such as art, need to clean supplies between classes. Whether there is a sink in the classroom or not, she will not have time to get to her next class. She stated she feels that Horne Street School is being penalized for running a good school. She also raised concerns about lack of private space for special education meetings without resource room spaces. “I think that tonight., as well as explaining the plan that is at hand, Mr. Skaltsis offered a future plan. And I think he offered a good future plan to write it into policy saying that if ‘these schools reach these numbers, these people will move.’ That is a future plan and I think it could be a successful one. The classrooms at Woodman, if they are done in time, I don’t think will be empty...Empty classrooms at a school don’t last. People fill them. Children fill them. As far as the actual physical space in the classroom, if you’ve been in a Horne Street School first grade classroom when the children are whispering, you’d think there is a riot going on. Thee are very tiny and they echo. My daughter’s classroom was across the hall room the music last year and I could hear the student’s songs with both doors closed. I could understand every work through two doors across the hall...I would also like to say that I am sorry to the committee, that there work has been nullified by many, and that we’ve had to have this special meeting because the work that day did was apparently, not good enough. I fell that now it’s going to be difficult now to get people to volunteer to serve on these committees because they’re going to feel like their work is futile.”

Doris Grady spoke: "I understand Mr. Johnsons' frustration. However, I happen to be a part of the committee that just did the observation... I can't leave here tonight letting people think that this committee didn't do their work. I sat at that committee's table. We have a group of volunteers in this city, and I think we as a Board should be very appreciative of the amount of time they've spent, and I don't think they should be told that you didn't do this and you didn't do that unless you sat there and watched them and could see what they did. When I sat at this particular table, they had maps on the table. When they made a decision... they continued to look for the best decision they could possibly make. I don't think it is fair to them to say, 'you didn't do this' and 'you didn't do that.' Yes, they did do that. I sat there. I watched them. I know what they did. It's a very difficult thing. If it's your child that's being affected, yes you get angry. If it's not your child that's being affected, that's another thing. We have a problem. The problem is, one school has too many kids in it and not enough space. Everybody sitting at this Board is a volunteer. We sit here, and we make the best decision that we can possibly make. May not always agree, but we make the best decision we can make for all of the kids that we represent. There's 4,000 of them out there, and in our elementary school, we're looking at about 1,250 kids. And out of 1,250 kids, unfortunately we have to look at 100... 'who are we going to pick, what we're going to do'... The committee came up with, what I feel, was the best they could do for us. The thing I object to, it might not be the one we end up with and we may not even do it, I don't know what that vote's going to be. But I don't want to leave here tonight without thanking every single volunteer who came to those meetings, every night, represented you, represented the community, and represented me. For that, I want to say thank you."

Dorothea Hooper stated, "I also want to say thank you to the people, parents, staff, that served on that committee. But I also want to say thank you to the interested citizens who played devil's advocate, and who came up with, I think, some really good questions on this issue. I don't think the committee should feel their work was diminished in any way, shape, or form because people have different opinions. That's what bothers me. I think we all should be in a position at this point, we're all functioning adults, where we can look at this from everybody else's point of view. I've seen Mrs. Szabunka's point of view. I've been at Horne Street School at many events where I've said, 'Please dear Lord, don't let there be a fire' – because it's absolutely jam-packed! But I also think that some very good ideas came from other people on this issue. For one thing, I think we maybe we ought to think about, when we have another committee, actively going out and getting parents from different districts, different neighborhoods in the district, so everybody can say, 'Okay, everybody had some kind of representation.' ... I think we have to understand that people are going to have different opinions. I represent Garrison School. I'm going to bring up all kinds of stuff, devil's advocate, because that's my district you're messing around with now. Yet, at the same time, by the very nature of this job, I feel very strongly that I have to represent all children in all districts. I have great respect for what the parents who have questioned what you've done have brought up. I think maybe we should take a look at what they've talked about and think about it for the next time we go into one of these very sensitive projects. I also thank the (sub-committee) for their time. You met for four months and I'm sure that many of you did your homework and I don't diminish what you've done, so please you don't thank that. But again, I respect the opposing opinions... A lot of these questions have to be asked. I don't know what my decision will be on this, but I think there's also some validity to the idea that we don't have all three elementary schools in play... and that there might be some advantage to waiting. After that time, I don't care whose kids go. Somebody got to go and they have to accept that. For the greater good somebody's going to have to accept the idea that some children are going to have to be moved. But thank you to everybody – thank you to the

committee and thank you to the people who have come here and fought the good battle over what they feel was not done properly or what they would have liked to have seen done.”

F. ADJOURNMENT: At 9:15 p.m., Doris Grady moved, Audra Lurvey seconded, to adjourn the Workshop Session. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

Respectfully submitted,

BRANDON FOYE, SECRETARY
Dover School Board
BF/kgb
March 20, 2007