Boulder Valley School District

Operational Services

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www.bvsd.org

September 16, 2015

TO: Bruce Messinger, Ph.D., Superintendent

FROM: Don Orr, Chief Facilities Officer

RE: Air Conditioning Project at Southern Hills Middle School Neighborhood Concerns and Next Steps

Background

The scope of work for the 2014 Bond project at Southern Hills Middle School calls for installation of building-wide air conditioning. The district's preferred alternative for cooling the school is a pair of 100-ton, ground-mounted, air-cooled chillers located on the north side of the school. Due to the proximity of residences to this location, the preferred alternative includes sound mitigation measures.

Neighbor Concerns

A postcard notifying neighbors of the project and how to get information was sent to residences within 500' of the school in June. At the second meeting of the Design Advisory Team (DAT), a neighbor voiced concerns over the potential noise impacts of locating the system on the north side of the building. Sound mitigation has been included in the preferred alternative to reduce impacts to neighbors.

BVSD hosted a neighborhood meeting at the school on September 9 to share information about the preferred alternative and gather input. Neighbors were invited to the meeting via a letter that was hand delivered to each house adjacent to the school property on Ludlow Street along the northern boundary of the school. Eleven people signed the attendance list for the meeting.

At the meeting, the design team shared the process for selecting the preferred alternative which included evaluation of five initial options based on five criteria. These options were narrowed to three and further evaluated on seven criteria. From this list, the preferred alternative was selected. The team evaluating the options included the architect, mechanical engineer, BVSD Project Manager, BVSD Project Manager of Energy Systems, BVSD Building Automation Control Specialist and BVSD Sustainability Coordinator. The location on the north side of the building is the most cost effective and energy efficient option and would have the least impact on the learning environment. Staff stated that a final decision as to the location had not yet been made, and that neighborhood input would be collected and considered. At the meeting, neighbors expressed concern over the potential noise of the preferred alternative and lack of faith in the success of any sound mitigation measures. They also said they felt communication on the issue had not been adequate.

Next steps

BVSD staff (Don Orr, Mike Cuskelly, Mark Schlindwein, Terry Gillach, Aaron Mikulewicz, Susan Cousins) and Brian Erickson of Davis Partnerships have considered the feedback presented by neighbors at the

meeting. Responding to the concerns and interests of the neighbors, BVSD will evaluate an alternative location for the preferred system and an alternative system. Specifically, BVSD will proceed with the following next steps:

1. Further study acoustic mitigation measures for the preferred alternative (air cooled-chiller) in the proposed location on the north side of the building to determine lowest possible sound level that can be achieved.

2. Evaluate cost (first and operating), acoustic impacts (neighbor and learning environment) and energy efficiency of locating the proposed system on the southeast corner of the school adjacent to the music classroom.

3. Investigate using a geothermal exchange system as an option for cooling the building.

Timeline

Staff estimates it will take at least two weeks to perform this work and evaluate the results. We anticipate being able to share the results of the investigation with the community at a public meeting at the school the week of October 12. Information regarding the next steps and the community meeting will be communicated on the Southern Hills Middle School webpage, via email to attendees of the Sept. 9 meeting and via postcard to the neighborhood.

Design work for the mechanical improvements in the scope of work is on hold pending the investigation of the items listed above which may compromise the project schedule.