

To: Alan Macdonald, Chair, Hingham School Building Committee

The Hingham Town Government Study Committee asks that you, in consultation with fellow School Building Committee members, carefully consider the following questions and answer them as fully as possible. Please return your responses in writing by November 8 to Eva Marx and Scott Ford, the members of the Town Government Study Committee who are working with your committee.

1. Please state your committee's charge or job description.

Implementing the 10 year School Facility master Plan.

2. To whom is your committee accountable?

School Committee and Town Meeting

3. What three things contribute most to the successful functioning of your committee?

a. Clear, universally agreed upon objective/ goals

b. Great staff support -- School Dept.

c. We realized we were only really there to make major policy decisions, otherwise we put the right professionals in the right place and let them do their job.

4. What three things would you change to bring about more effective functioning?

a. Support, cooperation, understanding from other boards and Town staff -- among the greatest frustrations in the project were extraneous orders, directives, requirements placed on us by the Planning Board, Zoning Board, Building Inspector, Fire Department with no apparent understanding of the burden or cost it placed on the project and the Town. It seemed like these groups just made us do things because they could and they needed to feel they were doing their job.

The other factors that represented real challenges do us are not really things that could be changed at the town government level. The greatest other challenges we faced were things like frustrations with the MA School Building Authority and the arcane frustrations of public construction laws.

5. What challenges do you anticipate that might impact the work of your

committee in the future and what changes would you suggest for

addressing  
those challenges?

- a. town finances
- b. Personal financial circumstances of Hingham families and their ability to support further phases of the master plan.
- c. "Collaboration" with the MSBA.

6. Do you have anything to add?

The only real frustrations that we faced on a local level -- that I feel could be changed -- are:

1. The problem mentioned above with other Boards and Town officials interfering with no sense, or concern, for the impact of their actions (this is probably something that is worth a follow-up conversation), and

2. the total lack of professional journalistic impartiality displayed by the Hingham Journal reporter that covered our project.

I am happy to discuss any of my thoughts in further detail if it would be helpful to your exercise. I apologize again for the delay.

- Al Macdonald