



Department of Administrative Services  
165 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT 06106

## School Building Projects Advisory Council

### Meeting Minutes

June 23, 2016, 10:00 am

Legislative Office Building, Room 1B, 300 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT

### In attendance

Members Present
Commissioner Melody A. Currey, Chair Lou Casolo Glenn Gollenberg Antonio Iadarola

Members Absent
Gian-Carl Casa John Woodmansee

Other Departmental Representatives
William Turley, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection

Attendance - Staff
Director Konstantinos Diamantis, Office of School Construction Grants and Review Barbara Fabiani Kermit Thompson Timothy O'Brien

Attendance – Consultants
<i>Warner Concepts, LLC</i> Charles Warner Rob Kelly Randy Fischer

### Meeting business

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Currey at 10:03am.

Agenda Item 1: Commissioner's Comments
Commissioner Currey began the meeting, asking for the staff and consultants to introduce themselves.  Commissioner Currey introduced the discussion of the draft Connecticut School Construction Standards and Guidelines with a history of the creation of the Standards and Guidelines from the recommendations of the SBPAC. Commissioner Currey thanked Deputy Commissioner Salemi for his work on this.



Commissioner Currey recognized Director Konstantinos Diamantis, of the Office of School Construction Grants and Review (OSCG&R), for the presentation of the draft Standards and Guidelines.

### Agenda Item 3: School Construction Design Standards and Guidelines

Director Diamantis thanked Commissioner Currey and the eight staff of OSCG&R and Deputy Commissioner Salemi for their work on the draft Standards and Guidelines. He discussed the process of creating the Standards and Guidelines including selecting the consultant, Warner Concepts. He discussed the formation of the committee to create the draft Standards and Guidelines, with representatives including the State Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood, DAS environmental expert Jeff Bolton and others. Topics discussed included facility requirements, construction materials, ineligibility and space guidelines and waivers. Barbara Fabiani and Kermit Thompson, architects in OSCG&R staffed the process of creating the Standards and Guidelines. Director Diamantis introduced Fabiani.

Fabiani described the process leading up to and involved in the creation of the draft Standards and Guidelines, and introduced Charles Warner of Warner Concepts.

Warner introduced the other members of his team involved in creating the draft Standards and Guidelines, and discussed the planning process. He discussed that isolated classrooms are a thing of the past and being replaced by interactive models, with things like mobile furniture and writable walls. He described each of the chapters of the Standards and Guidelines.

## Connecticut School Construction Standards and Guidelines

- **Chapter 1 – Executive Summary**
- **Chapter 2 – Educational Facility Planning Concepts**
- **Chapter 3 – Educational Framework**
- **Chapter 4 – Site Selection & Design**
- **Chapter 5 – Compilation of Space**
- **Chapter 6 – Program Space Guidelines**
- **Chapter 7 – Building Systems**

Warner staff discussed how the manual might work in a school construction grant process.

Casolo asked about the use of the term “Standards”, “Standards being more concrete requirements than “Guidelines”. Warner responded that some things should be guidelines.

Discussion (Casolo, Warner staff, Diamantis) occurred on combined school type configurations not being in the Standards and Guidelines, that there should be a footnote to note the applicability of age ranges, the evaluation of age ranges and that the acreage standards are not rigid.

Discussion (Casolo, Warner) occurred on space templates.

Discussion (Casolo, Warner, Gollenberg) occurred on bathrooms in classrooms and that they are discussed in Chapter 5.



Discussion (Casolo, Warner, Gollenberg) occurred about LEED and that Connecticut High Performance and school safety standards are referenced.

Diamantis noted that Chief State Architect David Barkin co-chaired the committee.

Warner staff discussed programming considerations, including site costs and cost escalation. They compared per square foot school construction costs in Connecticut, \$300-\$900/square foot, with other states, such as Arkansas, \$175/square foot, Ohio, \$250/square foot, and Massachusetts, \$360/square foot. Factors noted related to the 150-200% higher cost in Connecticut included redundancies in oversight and differences in reimbursement rates.

Warner staff discussed their recommendation for a maximum reimbursable cost per square foot of \$375. Reasons include budgetary considerations, to have consistency, for reporting and in order to get more schools funded.

Casolo discussed the maximum reimbursable cost per square foot proposal: that costs can vary by reimbursement rate, that data is not yet updated, that UNIFORMAT cost tracking has recently been adopted, that it might be premature to choose a maximum reimbursable cost per square foot, PLAs effect on costs, geographic cost differences and environmental considerations.

Warner staff discussed costs in Connecticut relative to other states – Connecticut’s costs would be expected to be higher, but Connecticut’s actual costs are higher than would be expected.

Diamantis discussed the process of examining the different costs in different parts of the state and that consistency in contracts could help lower costs.

Discussion (Casolo, Diamantis, Iadarola) occurred on creating a cost formula taking various factors into consideration, taking time to get the right maximum reimbursable costs and that a \$375 maximum in Danbury resulted in fewer bidders.

Discussion (Warner staff, Commissioner Currey) occurred that control on program administration time can bring down costs and that this is a goal of DAS.

Commissioner Currey directed that Warner Concepts be brought back for additional SBPAC discussion on the maximum reimbursable cost per square foot.

Discussion (Golleberg, Casolo, Warner staff) occurred that a maximum reimbursable cost per square foot would be the amount reimbursed rather than the amount spent, that it might cause some communities to not be able to afford school construction, that the local share would go up considerably and that examining the reimbursement rate might help.

Warner presented the calculations spreadsheet part of the draft Standards and Guidelines. Discussion (Warner, Casolo, Gollenberg, Diamantis, Commissioner Currey) occurred on the spreadsheet, including the structure of calculations, gross building calculations, the number of students per instructional area, consideration of teacher contracts and that the State Department of Education (SDE) was directly involved in the students per instructional area calculations.

Discussion (Commissioner Currey, Warner, Casolo, Diamantis) occurred on multi-purpose rooms, whether elementary school auditoria should be reimbursable, SDE’s education specifications input, “applications labs” in vo-tech schools, special education space, that parking garages are not reimbursable and new construction versus renovation.

Diamantis closed the discussion, thanking the committee, David Barkin and the Commissioner.

**Agenda Item 2: Minutes of previous meeting**

A **motion** (Gollenberg, Casolo) was made to approve the minutes of the December 2, 2015 meeting.



Discussion (Casolo, Commissioner Currey) occurred about the minutes reference to doing the Standards and Guidelines in-house and that engaging Warner Concepts expedited their creation.

**Motion approved.**

**On the draft Connecticut School Construction Standards and Guidelines**

A **motion** (Gollenberg, Iadarola) was made to accept the report and Connecticut School Construction Standards and Guidelines as presented by Warner Concepts.

Discussion (Casolo, Iadarola, Commissioner Currey, Diamantis) occurred on the motion and on the determination of the maximum reimbursable cost per square foot.

Commissioner Currey directed that there should be a meeting soon on the maximum reimbursable cost per square foot.

Discussion (Diamantis, Iadarola, Casolo) occurred that many items in the report can be implemented administratively, while others may need legislation to be implemented, that the Standards and Guidelines will not result in additional school design reviews, on the role of the Standards and Guidelines and standard contracts in creating a maximum reimbursable cost per square foot and about whether the Standards and Guidelines should be approved with changes still needed.

Commissioner Currey offered that there should be review to make changes to the draft Standards and Guidelines and maximum reimbursable cost per square foot and that SBPAC should reconvene to consider them.

Discussion (Commissioner Currey, Diamantis, Casolo, Iadarola) occurred on the process.

The **motion** (Gollenberg, Iadarola) was restated to accept the draft Connecticut School Construction Standards and Guidelines, subject to further amendment and revision, with final revisions provided two weeks prior to final approval.

**Motion approved.**

Commissioner Currey stated that the Standards and Guidelines not yet be transmitted to the Governor, but should be posted online for comments, as a draft

Discussion (Casolo, Diamantis) occurred on the process of posting the Standards and Guidelines online.

A **motion** (Iadarola) was made to post the draft Connecticut School Construction Standards and Guidelines online with comments to be presented to the Office of School Construction Grants and Review.

**Motion approved.**

**Agenda Item 4: Adjournment**

A **motion** (Iadarola, Gollenberg) was made to adjourn.

**Motion approved.**

Commissioner Currey declared the meeting adjourned.