

November 22, 2005
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mt. Greylock High School Initiating Building Study

The members of the Building Committee of the Mount Greylock Regional School District have announced that the design firm of Dore & Whittier Architects, Inc. will be at the school on Tuesday, November 29, 2005, to initiate their assessment of building conditions. Dore & Whittier Architects were selected from nine proposers by the School Committee at its meeting on Tuesday, November 15, 2005, as the design firm that will complete a feasibility study. The study will culminate with options for addressing the educational needs of the District and will be based on their assessment of the physical condition of the school and evaluation of space needs. Project managers Lee Dore and Donald Walter of Dore & Whittier Architects will attend the site assessment with the various sub-consultants who will be working with them on the project.

The Building Committee was formed by the School District in February 2005, as a result of concerns regarding the existing facilities. As noted by School Committee member David Langston at a recent Building Committee meeting, after many years of tight school budgets with minimal funding for deferred maintenance and capital improvements, the MGRS building needs work. The known deficiency in the heating and ventilation systems triggered a review of all of the building systems. The systems are outdated and inefficient and this is further exacerbated by the rising energy costs. In addition, performing needed improvements at the school will trigger issues regarding compliance with modern building code and Americans with Disabilities Act provisions.

The Building Committee has heard that certain aspects of the facility are adversely affecting educational activities at the school. The layout of the middle school classroom impedes organization of the middle school in the manner now recommended by educators. The science labs lack modern safety features, which limit hands-on student work. The undersized gym and inadequate cafeteria are imposing limits on the ability of the administration to schedule classes.

The design firm of Dore & Whittier Architects will consider at least three options for upgrading the existing facility: (1) A minor renovation addressing the most critical building and code deficiencies; (2) A major renovation and possible addition and/or partial demolition addressing all identified educational, building and code deficiencies; and (3) Replacing the existing facility with a new school built on the same property.

The Building Committee will host a series of public meetings to gather information for use in the feasibility study and to obtain public feedback on the options to be included in the study. The public's participation is strongly encouraged to ensure that all pertinent issues are considered in the feasibility study. The first public meeting will be on Tuesday, January 10, 2006, and will review current conditions and deficiencies in the school facilities. There will be a second public meeting on Tuesday January 24, 2006 to address enrollment projections, educational needs deficiencies, and to preview various options for the school.

The options will be discussed in more detail at a third public meeting on Wednesday, February 15, 2006. All three meetings will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the high school. Additional public meetings and information sessions will be scheduled as needed. The Building Committee expects to present its recommendations to the School Committee during the February and March 2006 budget process on whether or how to perform additional design work.

The Building Committee has a homepage on the school's website at www.mgrhs.org, which includes numerous prior studies on various aspects of the building and its needs. A complete list of the Building Committee meetings, which are open to the public, and the public hearings, will be posted on the Calendar section of the school website. The public may contact Andy Hogeland, the Building Committee chair, for additional information, by telephone at his home 458-5966, at work at 448-7706 or by email to andrew.hogeland@ge.com