



October 20, 2009

Middle school phase gets board's OK

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FREMONT -- City school board members approved the Fremont Middle School project design development phase Monday night.

The approval allows architect Fanning Howey Associates Inc. and construction manager Touchstone to continue preparing construction documents.

The design development phase notebook, which was submitted last week, includes updated construction estimates for the work based upon the drawings and the budget for the project as included in the Ohio School Facilities Commission master plan.

Curt South, project manager and senior associate of Fanning Howey, showed board members some possible color schemes for the brick. He said the idea is to make the new building the same color scheme as the natatorium. The school will have a ground floor with a main entrance, office, gymnasium, kitchen and cafeteria, media center, art rooms and more. There will be three stories of classrooms.

The design aims to include as much natural light as possible.

Traffic study results also are back and board members are looking at the drop-off and pick-up routines. South said a separate drive along the side of the middle school would be used only for fire trucks, and would not be connected to North Street.

Chris Moore, senior project manager for Touchstone, said the firm will look to receive bids in February and construction will begin in the spring.

"All in all we're on budget and on schedule. ... So we're optimistic. Bidders are hungry and we're optimistic you'll get good numbers and a lot of bidders as well," Moore said.

The board also approved bidder workforce standards -- for example, checking out contractors and finding out what their largest project has been -- for the project. Moore complimented the district on taking the time to do that.

South said rumors that the middle school is being built on quicksand are false. South said the soils are soft, so designers had to make adjustments.

"We do have a structural design to accommodate the soil," he said. "We had (soil) borings done by two different companies. ... The bottom line is it's not a problem."

Superintendent Traci McCaudy said rumors of the high school's swimming pool caving in also are false.



Curt South, of Fanning Howey Associates Inc., gives a presentation Monday night on the new Fremont Middle School. (Leslie Bixler News-Messenger)