

Agenda
Joint Meeting
Farmington High School Community Survey Ad Hoc Committee and
Farmington High School Facility & Financial Ad Hoc Committee
November 27, 2018
Farmington High School Cafeteria
7:00 PM

- A. Call to Order.
- B. Public Comment.
- C. Consideration of Special Topics.
 - 1) Presentation of Survey Results.
 - 2) Review of FHS Community Survey Ad Hoc Committee's Findings and Recommendations (**Attachment 1**).
 - 3) Discussion / Q&A
- D. Adjournment.

cc: Committee Members
Paula Ray, Town Clerk

Farmington High School Community Survey Ad Hoc Committee
Survey Results- Findings & Recommendations
November 27, 2018

SUMMARY

The Farmington High School Community Survey Ad Hoc Committee selected the Center for Research and Public Policy (CRPP) to collect input regarding citizen attitudes towards and willingness to finance a high school project. Using a qualitative research design, CRPP received 400 completed phone surveys among Farmington, CT residents from October 17-25, 2018. Survey design was a careful, deliberative process to ensure fair, objective and balanced surveys. The FHS Community Survey Ad Hoc Committee provided survey input and CRPP staff, with years of survey design experience, edited out any bias. All scales used by CRPP (either numeric, such as one through ten, or wording such as strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree) were balanced evenly, and the placement of questions was carefully accomplished so that order has minimal impact.

The survey included the following areas for investigation:

- Quality of life living in Farmington;
- Current standard of living;
- Rating Farmington Town services;
- Rating Farmington Public Schools;
- Interest in and perceived importance of Farmington High School upgrades/updates;
- Awareness levels for Statement of Need required high school repairs;
- Overall support or opposition to modifying Farmington High School;
- Support and opposition to new construction/renovation at varied cost levels/tax impact levels;
- Sources for information about the Farmington school system and town;
- Views on the 2017 high school referendum-support or opposition;
- Reasons for 2017 support or opposition in the referendum
- Understanding of the 2017 proposed high school project costs;
- Demographics.

The survey conducted by CRPP is approximately proportional to population contributions of Farmington, without significant over-or-under representation of various geographic or demographic groups within a sampling frame. A "super random digit" sampling procedure was utilized to derive a working telephone sample of both listed and unlisted telephone numbers. In addition, a "mixed access" sample of both cell and landline phone numbers was utilized. Each qualified resident who lives in Farmington had an equal chance for participating in the study.

Statistically, the sample of 400 surveys had an associated margin for error of +/- 4.89% at a 95% confidence interval.

COMMITTEE FINDINGS

High Quality of Life

- 99.3% of residents surveyed reported their quality of life living in Farmington as very good (72.8%) or good (26.5%).

Satisfaction with Town services and Farmington Public Schools

- The positive rating for Town services was 87.9% and 82.1% on public schools.

Friends/Family/Neighbors/Co-workers, Printed Local Newspapers, and Farmington Town Letter are the 3 main ways people get information about the school system and Town.

- Friends/Family/Neighbors/Co-workers- 31.5%
- Local Newspapers: Printed- 29.0%
- Farmington Town newsletter- 23.3%
- 9.5% use social media for information (Facebook is the most popular)

Residents are aware of the needs of the FHS facility as outlined in the Statement of Needs

- Approximately two-thirds of all residents surveyed were aware of most of the needs
- Respondents were most aware of the needs for school safety and security upgrades (68.0%), required roof repairs (67.5%), and increased space to accommodate students and educational needs (67.3%)

There is support for a project

- 82.8% of respondents agree that an updated and upgraded high school facility is important to maintaining home property values
- 51.0% support at least a \$135M project
- 54.5% support at least a \$125M project
- 62.3% support at least a \$100M project
- 74.3% support at least a \$75M project

Nearly three quarters (74.1%) of respondents support a project that accomplishes more than the minimum requirements

- 32.8% support a new (at least 85% new) FHS where all required and most desired upgrades are considered; 41.3% support a renovated FHS where all required and some desired upgrades are accomplished.
- There was less interest in a renovation where the minimum required updates are accomplished (15.5%)
- 84.3% agreed that they could be convinced to support if they clearly understood the need.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Focused, Clear, and Concise communication is necessary to build support of a Project.

- **Understand how people get their information**
 - Friends/family/neighbors/co-workers is how most of those surveyed get their information (31.5%)
- **Encourage more public participation**
 - Over half (54.3%) think public participation was sought in the planning process
 - Need to get people inside the FHS facility (cross tabulations indicate increased support, awareness of needs, and understanding of project proposal for those that have been in the facility recently)
- **Show the public how the committee arrived at the proposed project**
 - 59.8% said they had enough information to make an informed decision
 - 17.5% said they would definitely support a project if they know the detailed plan with on-going updates on proposal and process
- **Communicate the required vs. desired upgrades**
 - 88% of those surveyed agreed that this should be distinguished in public communication
- **Communicate the Facility Project Cost**
 - Clearly articulate & justify the price of the project (show residents what they are getting, distinguish between required vs. desired needs)
 - 41% of those surveyed do not recall/know the price of the last project
 - 52% of those that opposed the project believe the price was overblown, costly, excessive, etc.

A new building committee should use the survey results throughout their process.

CONSULTANT OBSERVATIONS

Findings:

- It appears that the opposition identified and turned out their opposition vote
- The opposition prevailed with their messages (ex: that the new plan would create the most expensive new high school in the state/nationally)
- Residents felt that the options were not presented in the process leading up to the vote
- There is little recall of what the total cost was in 2017 (41% said they were unsure)
- Residents felt rushed, pushed into the vote

Recommendations:

- Marketing- communication must focus on 4-5 messages
- The survey found that there is significant awareness of the needs for the high school facility in community, aim to increase awareness to 75-80%